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DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

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Website: salarnews.in | www.magzter.com | 11 FEBRUARY 2026 | WEDNESDAY | BENGALURU | 22 SHABAN, 1447 H | Vol 5 | Issue No 35 | Pages: 8

Not published yet: Naravane on memoir status

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Former Army chief General MM Naravane on Tuesday shared a publisher's clarification stating that his memoir, 'Four Stars of Destiny', has not been published in any form. Posting Penguin Random House India's statement on X, Naravane wrote, "This is the status of the book." The clarification followed public discourse and media reports around the memoir. Amid the controversy, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi cited a December 2023 social media post by Naravane announcing the book as "available now", questioning the publisher's claim. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Babri will never be rebuilt again: Yogi

BARABANKI, 10 FEB

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath declared that the day of 'Qayamat' (doomsday) will never arrive, and the Babri Masjid will never be reconstructed. The Supreme Court's 2019 verdict authorised the construction of a Ram temple on the disputed site in Ayodhya, ruling that a five-acre plot should be allocated for a mosque elsewhere in the town. Hindus contend that the mosque was erected by Barbur after demolishing a Ram temple. The structure was destroyed by kar sevaks in 1992, triggering widespread communal unrest. *—PTI*

Woman killed in Gwalior temple stampede

GWALIOR, 10 FEB

A 70-year-old woman was killed, and six others injured during a stampede at the Navgrah Temple inauguration in Dabra, Madhya Pradesh. Gwalior Collector Ruchika Chauhan said several women had gathered near Dabra stadium for the Kalash Yatra in the morning. She stated, "During the distribution of the Kalash, a scuffle broke out. A 70-year-old woman was crushed in the crowd and died later." Gwalior Range IG Arvind Saxena added, "Many women rushed forward, leading to a stampede-like situation. One woman was crushed to death." *—PTI*

Government to sell up to 5% in BHEL at Rs 254 per share

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The government will sell up to 5 per cent stake in Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd (BHEL) via an offer for sale (OFS) beginning on Wednesday at a floor price of Rs 254 a share.

"Government offers to disinvest 3 per cent equity in the BHEL with an additional 2 oer cent as green shoe option," Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary Arunish Chawla said on X.

The issue will open for non-retail investors on Wednesday, while retail investors will get to put in price bid on Thursday.

If fully subscribed at the floor price, sale of 17.41 crore shares, or 5 per cent stake, would fetch the government Rs 4,422 crore.

The floor price of Rs 254 a share is about 8 per cent below BHEL's closing share price of Rs 276.05 on the BSE.

The base issue size comprises over 10.44 crore shares, or 3 per cent stake, in BHEL, plus a greenshoe option to sell over 6.96 crore shares or 2 per cent.

The government holds 63.17 per cent in BHEL. Shares of BHEL closed at Rs 276.05, up 0.53 per cent over its previous close on Tuesday. *—PTI*

Oppn moves notice to remove Birla as LS Speaker

Birla to not preside over House; RaGa no-show on motion

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Opposition parties on Tuesday submitted a no confidence motion seeking to remove Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla from office, alleging that he had acted in a "blatantly partisan" manner in conducting the business of the House and "abused" the constitutional office he occupies.

Congress' deputy leader in the Lok Sabha Gaurav Gogoi chief whip K Suresh and whip Mohamed Jawed submitted the notice under Article 94 C of the Constitution to Lok Sabha Secretary General Utpal Kumar Singh on behalf of several opposition parties, including the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the DMK.

Sources said the notice was signed by around 120 MPs of the Opposition, including those of the Congress, DMK, Samajwadi Party, Left parties and RJD. Shiv Sena UBT and NCP-SP have also signed the notice.

However, Rahul Gandhi, Leader of Opposition (LoP) in the Lok Sabha, reportedly did not sign the motion. Sources said that it was unparliamentary for the LoP to sign a motion against the speaker. The TMC is also not a signatory to the notice.

In response, Birla said he would not preside over the Lok Sabha citing moral grounds, sources said. Article 96 also bars a Speaker or a Deputy Speaker to preside the House while a resolution for their removal from office is under consideration.

The resolution says that Birla did not allow the LoP to speak on multiple occasions. The most recent flare-up has been when Gandhi attempted to speak on former army chief MM Naravane's unpublished 'Four Stars of Destiny' during the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address.

"The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha is almost invariably not allowed to speak," it claimed. "We are pained and anguished at the manner in which he has consistently prevented Opposition members of Parliament from raising issues of legitimate public concern."

It also said that eight MPs were "arbitrarily suspended" from the entire Budget session. Drawing reference to Nishikant Dubey, it said that "the BJP was permitted to make wholly objectionable and personalised attacks on two former prime ministers without being reprimanded."

It also objected to Parliamentary Affairs Minister Kiren Rijiju claiming that a dozen Opposition MPs barged into the Speakers chambers ahead of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's scheduled address. *—Agencies*

>>>More on Pages 3, 5

Govt-Oppn logjam breaks, LS takes up discussion on Budget

Ending gridlock, the Lok Sabha on Tuesday took up the Union Budget discussion, stalled over the opposition's demand that LoP Rahul Gandhi be allowed to speak. After two adjournments, the House met at 2 pm, with Krishna Prasad Tenneti in the Chair asking Shashi Tharoor to open the debate. The thaw followed an opposition notice seeking Speaker Om Birla's removal. Since 2 February, disruptions led to the suspension of seven Congress and one CPI(M) member.

During SIR, authorities identified 4,78,992 deceased electors, 5,23,680 voters who had shifted and 53,619 cases of multiple entriesn *—PTI*

2.43 lakh names deleted in Assam ahead of polls

GUWAHATI/KOLKATA, 10 FEB

- The final electoral roll has 2.49 crore voters, a 0.97 per cent decline from the draft list released on 27 December last year,

The Election Commission on Tuesday published the final voters' list for poll-bound Assam after a Special Revision (SR), with over 2.43 lakh names deleted from the draft roll.

According to the Assam Chief Electoral Officer (CEO), the final electoral roll has 2.49 crore voters, a 0.97 per cent decline from the draft list released on 27 December last year, which had 2.52 crore names. The final roll includes nearly 1.25 crore men and over 1.24 crore women.

During the SR exercise, authorities identified 4,78,992 deceased electors, 5,23,680 voters who had shifted residence, and 53,619 cases of multiple entries, reflected only after the claims and objections process concluded.

"Electors whose names were deleted as permanently shifted can seek inclusion under provisions of the Representation of the People Act, 1950. If they could not apply before the deletion, they can now apply for inclusion at their new address," an official said, adding that district election officers have been instructed for "rigorous checks" while processing such applications.

The SR exercise sparked political controversy, with opposition alleging harassment of genuine voters, particularly from minority communities. CM Himanta Biswa Sarma had earlier said BJP workers filed over five lakh complaints against "illegal Bangladeshis".

WB FINAL ROLL NOW ON 28 FEB

Meanwhile, the EC revised the schedule for the SIR in West Bengal, saying the final electoral roll will now be published on 28 February, in compliance with a Supreme Court order. Hearings will conclude by 14 February, scrutiny by 21 February, and rationalisation of polling stations by 25 February. *—PTI*

>>>More on Page 3

Trade deal: US says India will cut tariffs on pulses

NEW DELHI/ WASHINGTON, 10 FEB

India will cut or eliminate tariffs on certain pulses imported from the United States under the proposed interim trade agreement between the two countries, according to a White House fact sheet, a detail absent from the earlier joint statement issued after talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and US President Donald Trump.

The document said India would "eliminate or reduce tariffs on all US industrial goods and a wide range of US food and agricultural products, including certain pulses", along with soybean oil, wine and spirits, tree nuts, fresh and processed fruit, dried distillers' grains and red sorghum.

The inclusion of pulses marks a departure from the 6 February joint statement, which listed several farm products but did not mention them. The framework for the interim agreement was announced following a call between Modi and Trump, with both sides reaffirming their commitment to a broader Bilateral Trade Agreement (BTA). Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan had earlier said pulses would not be imported under the deal. However, Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal clarified that lentils, the main pulse imported from the US, have been shipped to India for years and would see phased tariff reductions. "Some items, like pistachios, walnuts, and lentils, have been exported [from the US to India] for years," Goyal said.

India's pulses import bill rose 46 per cent to $5.48 billion in 2024-25, though US shipments accounted for just $89.65 million. *—PTI*

Man falls into Delhi's open drain, dies

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

A 32-year-old man died after falling into an open drain in Rohini's Begampur area near the Mahashakti Kali Temple on Tuesday, highlighting ongoing civic safety failures in Delhi. The deceased, identified as Birju Kumar, a labourer from Bihar working in the capital, reportedly slipped into a deep sewer on DDA land while walking along the road.

Officials said teams from the Delhi Police and Delhi Fire Service were rushed to the spot after receiving an alert, and a rescue operation was launched. Kumar was later found dead.

The incident comes days after the death of 25-year-old motorcyclist Kamal Dhyani, an assistant manager at HDFC Bank's Rohini branch, who fell into a 15-foot-deep pit in Janakpuri on February 6. The pit, dug by the Delhi Jal Board for sewer work, was allegedly left inadequately secured. Dhyani's body and motorcycle were recovered from the 20-foot-deep pit. AAP MLA Saurabh Bharadwaj blamed the BJP-led government, alleging serious lapses in civic safety. *—PTI*

Hindu trader killed in Bangladesh

DHAKA, 10 FEB

Susen Chandra Sarkar *—FB*

A 62-year-old Hindu trader was hacked to death by unidentified assailants inside his shop in Trishal upazila, Mymensingh, Bangladesh, on Monday night. The victim, Susen Chandra Sarkar, owned 'Bhai Bhai Enterprise' and was a resident of Southkanda village.

Trishal Police Station chief Muhammad Firoz Hossain said the attackers used a sharp weapon, left Sarkar inside the shop, and closed the shutters. When his family sought him, they found him covered in blood and rushed him to Mymensingh Medical College Hospital, where doctors declared him dead. Sarkar's son, Sujan Sarkar, said, "We have had a rice business for a long time. No one had any enmity with us. The criminals stole several hundred thousand taka from the store after they brutally killed my father."

Sarkar's murder is the latest in a series of violent incidents targeting Bangladesh's minority communities. Since the killing of radical youth leader Sharif Osman Hadi in December, the Hindu community has faced increased violence. The Bangladesh Hindu Buddhist Christian Unity Council recorded 51 incidents of communal violence in December 2025 alone. Bangladesh will hold parliamentary elections on 12 February, the first since Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's ouster in August 2024 protests. The 2022 census reports approximately 13.13 million Hindus in Bangladesh, about 7.95 per cent of the population. *—PTI*

MUST LABEL DEEPFAKES

India tightens grip on social media with 3-hr takedown rule

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

– FREEPIK

The government on Tuesday tightened rules for social media platforms, including YouTube and X, mandating the takedown of unlawful content within three hours and requiring clear labelling of AI-generated and synthetic material.

The amended IT rules, issued via a gazette notification by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), come amid rising misuse of AI to create deepfakes, non-consensual intimate imagery, and misleading videos impersonating individuals or fabricating real events. Platforms must now embed permanent metadata or identifiers in AI content, prevent illegal material, and shorten user grievance redressal timelines. Content involving nudity, sexual acts, or exposure of private areas must be removed within two hours of being flagged.

AI-generated and synthetic content is defined as material created or altered algorithmically to appear real or authentic, but routine editing, accessibility work, and good-faith educational use are excluded. Platforms enabling AI content must prominently label it and cannot remove or suppress AI identifiers once applied. Users must declare AI content, which intermediaries must verify before publishing. Violations involving serious crimes must be reported to authorities.

The changes also require stricter user disclosures, including quarterly warnings about penalties for misusing AI content. Automated tools must prevent illegal, deceptive, or exploitative AI material, including child abuse, explosives, false documents, or impersonation.

The amendments, effective 20 February 2026 – coinciding with the India AI Impact Summit's conclusion – aim to curb deepfake harms, misinformation, and ensure stronger accountability from social media platforms and AI tool providers such as ChatGPT, Grok, and Gemini. *—PTI*

BWSSB to install tankers to curb water shortage in City

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

As summer approaches, the BWSSB has intensified preparations to meet rising water demand and prevent shortages in parts of Bengaluru, Chairman V Ram Prasath Manohar said on Tuesday. He said the board was fully prepared to meet the challenges of the season.

To mitigate the situation and ensure free access to drinking water for residents, the Board has decided to install mini water tanks (Sintex tanks) in the identified locations, he said in a release issued by the BWSSB.

Manohar chaired a high-level review meeting with senior officials at the Bangalore Water Supply and Sewerage Board head office in the City to assess summer preparedness.

Speaking after the meeting, the Chairman said the board had already identified high-density areas and localities likely to face water shortages.

Manohar issued strict instructions on the logistics of filling the tanks, stressing that priority should be given to BWSSB's own tankers and 'Sanchari Cauvery' mobile tankers.

He also said all officials must be in the field and not in their offices to assess the ground reality. *—PTI*

Rohit alleges sabotage in Ajit's plane crash

MUMBAI, 10 FEB

NCP (SP) MLA Rohit Pawar on Tuesday alleged that there was reason to suspect sabotage in the plane crash that killed Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar and four others last month, and demanded a comprehensive probe by multiple expert agencies.

Addressing a press conference, Rohit Pawar questioned the credentials of pilot Capt Sumit Kapoor, citing his past suspension for alcohol consumption, and said a probe by the State CID alone would be inadequate. He sought an investigation by agencies including the Aircraft Accident Investigation Bureau (AAIB), the US National Transportation Safety Board and the UK-based Air Accidents Investigation Branch.

"We do not believe this was a mere accident. There is room to suspect sabotage," he said, alleging that the aircraft owner, VSR Company, wielded influence over regulators. He also raised questions about the choice of runway, visibility, pilot communication and whether the aircraft's transponder was switched off. Sharad Pawar has ruled out conspiracy. —PTI

>>>More on Page 3

Man attempts housebreak, falls asleep inside

GAURIBIDANURU, 10 FEB

A man allegedly attempted to break in and rob a house in Gauribidanuru, Chikkaballapura district, but fell asleep inside the house. He was under the influence of alcohol. The incident took place on Sunday night when house owner Premanath, who runs a small eatery near the old RTO office layout, was away in Hyderabad with his family. Neighbours spotted two people entering the house by cutting the asbestos roof and alerted others. While one suspect escaped, Devaraj, the other did not. Premanath returned on Monday and found Devaraj sleeping inside. Devaraj said he took Rs 5,000, which he returned.—*Salar News*

18 arrested for cheating in Army recruitment exam

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

As many as Eighteen candidates involved in malpractice during a recent Army Group C recruitment examination have been arrested in Bengaluru, police said. The arrests followed an FIR filed by Colonel SS Jyothirlingam, Security Officer to the Commandant and Managing Director of the 515 Army Base Workshop. The exam took place on 8 February. The exam was for Civil Defence Employee Group C posts, specifically Lower Division Clerk positions. The FIR in Bengaluru says the 18 candidates were caught using digital and electronic devices to cheat. Electronic devices were found in their possession in the hall.—*PTI*

7-year old attacked by leopard near MM Hills

MYSURU, 10 FEB

A young boy was injured in a leopard attack at MM Hills Wildlife Sanctuary in Mysuru on Tuesday morning. Seven-year-old Shreyas from Channapatna, Bengaluru South District sustained minor injuries to his ears and bruises on his body. He was attacked while climbing the forest routes at MM Hills with other devotees from his village. He was treated at MM Hills Primary Health Centre. The incident follows the death of a Mandya villager last month. The attack has caused panic among devotees, who have been arriving in large numbers for the Mahashivarathri festival. The forest department will introduce drone surveillance during the five-day event from 14 February, increase patrols and have banned night-time padayatra. —*SALAR NEWS*

Minister highlights State's medical education in Dubai

DUBAI, 10 FEB

Dr Sharan Prakash R Patil, Minister for Medical Education, Skill Development, Entrepreneurship and Livelihood, highlighted Karnataka's strides in medical education and healthcare at WHX Dubai 2026. He called for global cooperation to address shared health challenges, stressing that a healthier population builds stronger nations. The three-day event features 4,800 exhibitors from 180 countries. Patil visited the Aster DM Healthcare booth and later inaugurated Thumbay Medicity at Thumbay Medical Centre.
—*SALAR NEWS*

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No confusion over leadership row: DKS

Says they have discussed it with the High Command, tells party members to 'shut up'

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

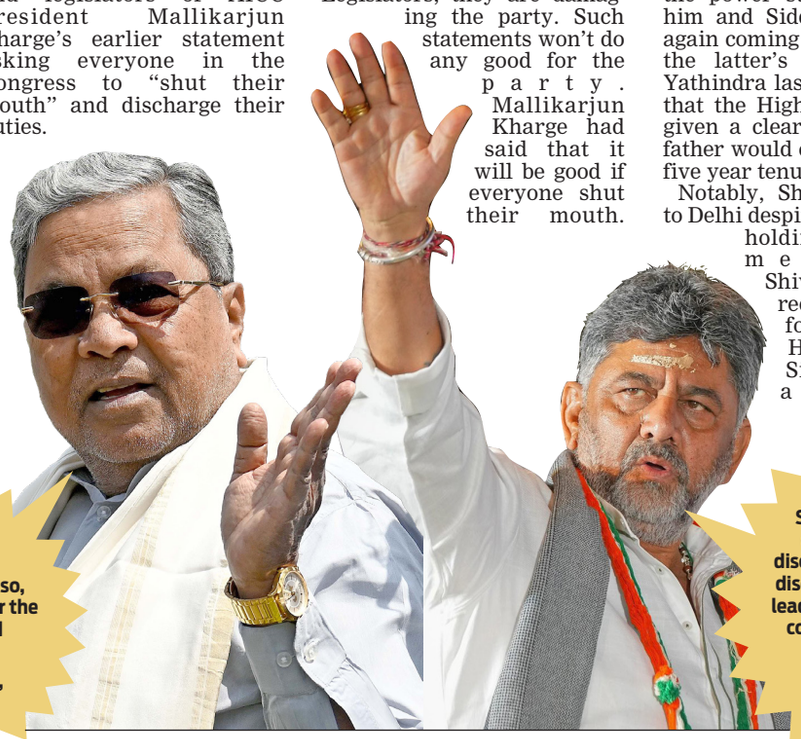
Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar said in Bengaluru that he has "no confusion" over the leadership issue involving Chief Minister Siddaramaiah as they have discussed the matter in presence of the Congress High Command.

Shivakumar also warned the local party functionaries against making any statements on the CM change subject, as he departed for New Delhi.

"There is no confusion. Others may have confusion, I don't have any confusion," Shivakumar said in Bengaluru on Tuesday.

"I know what Siddaramaiah and I have discussed. We have not discussed it secretly. We have discussed involving our party leadership. Others taking tension and making statements on the issue won't help anyone," he said.

He reminded party leaders and legislators of AICC President Mallikarjun Kharge's earlier statement asking everyone in the Congress to "shut their mouth" and discharge their duties.



Why do you keep asking? If Shivakumar says so, ask him... Whatever the High Command says is final
-Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

I know what Siddaramaiah and I have discussed. We have not discussed it secretly. We have discussed involving our party leadership.... Others may have confusion, I don't have any confusion
-DK Shivakumar, Deputy Chief Minister

"Whoever is making statements, either in my favour or against me, whether they are Ministers or Legislators, they are damaging the party. Such statements won't do any good for the party. Mallikarjun Kharge had said that it will be good if everyone shut their mouth. We should all abide by it," Shivakumar, also the State Congress President, added.

His comments came amid the power struggle between him and Siddaramaiah once again coming to the fore, with the latter's son and MLC Yathindra last week insisting that the High Command had given a clear signal that his father would complete his full five year tenure.

Notably, Shivakumar went to Delhi despite Siddaramaiah holding pre-budget meetings. Shivakumar said he requested the CM for permission. He noted that Siddaramaiah is also the Chairman of the Irrigation department.

Shivakumar said that he has ordered forming a Special Investigation Team (SIT) in the Revenue Department against the nexus to loot the irrigation department in a planned way.

Asked if he would meet party leaders in Delhi, Shivakumar said: "I keep meeting my party leaders and share my difficulties, sorrows, joys and aspirations".

Later in the day, Shivakumar met with Congress about the Assam general elections scheduled for April-May, where he has been appointed as the party's poll observer with former Chhattisgarh chief minister Bhupesh Baghel.

Meanwhile, Siddaramaiah reiterated that the High Command's decision is final.

When asked if he had been invited to Delhi, he said no. "Why should I go if I am not invited.... There is no use of you asking unnecessary questions."

However when reporters insisted, Siddaramaiah got upset and lashed out.
—*Agencies*

80-90 MLAs want DKS as CM: MLA

Ramanagara Congress MLA Iqbal Hussain said that 80-90 party MLAs had asked the High Command to make DK Shivakumar the Chief Minister. He said on Monday in Ramanagar: "We have left it for the high command. 80-90 MLAs have requested the high command to give a chance to DK Shivakumar (for the CM post).... We don't like (MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah) speaking in favour of his father again and again and embarrassing the High Command... Every father loves son, and son loves father, but in politics, we must have discipline. Provoking others shouldn't happen."

Land is ready: Patil on HDK's Rs 500 cr facility in Mandya

Union Minister HD Kumaraswamy —*x*

- Kumaraswamy said the Centre wants to set up an ARAI in Mandya, but the State wasn't helping. However, MB Patil said the State was ready to provide the 100 acres of land needed for the facility

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

Minister MB Patil on Tuesday said that 100 acres of land in Mandya district is available for the proposed country's first Construction and Infrastructure Equipment Testing Facility, estimated to cost Rs 500 crore.

Patil has written to Union Minister for Heavy Industries and Steel HD Kumaraswamy, seeking directions for the Automotive Research Association of India (ARAI) to submit a detailed project proposal, his office said in a release.

In a reply on Monday to a letter from Kumaraswamy dated January 8, Patil said the District Commissioner of Mandya has confirmed that 105 acres of government land is available in Muddanaghatta and Heggadithihalli villages of Basaralu Hobli in Mandya taluk.

He added that the land is located just 500 metres from the Mandya–Nagamangala State Highway and exceeds the area originally sought for the facility.

The Minister for Large and Medium Industries urged that representatives of ARAI and officials from the Union Ministry be directed to visit Karnataka at the earliest for a joint inspection to assess the site's suitability.

He also stated that ARAI may directly coordinate with S Selvakumar, Principal Secretary, Department of Industries, Government of Karnataka. —*PTI*

A NEW FACE TO MYSURU SANDAL SOAP

Actress Tamanna Bhatia takes over on Tuesday as brand ambassador of the Karnataka Soaps and Detergents Limited (KSDL), which produces the iconic Mysuru Sandal Soap. While critics alleged that she is 'non-Kannadiga', the State government said she will bring star appeal to the brand during her two-year tenure *PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD*

Catholic body seeks repeal of 'forcible conversion' laws

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of India (CBCI) on Tuesday demanded that the Centre repeal legislations it said were inconsistent with religious freedom and the right to privacy, alleging that innocent people were being jailed on unfounded charges of forcible religious conversions.

The demand was made at the conclusion of the CBCI's 37th general body meeting, held from 4 to 10February, during which Cardinal Poola Anthony, Metropolitan Archbishop of Hyderabad, was elected president.

Citing Article 25 of the Constitution, the CBCI said it guarantees freedom of conscience and the right to profess, practise and propagate religion. "As many innocent individuals are incarcerated on unfounded allegations of forcible conversions, we strongly demand the repeal of such legislation," the statement said.

The bishops expressed concern over the continued denial of rights to Dalit Christians, calling it an indirect form of discrimination despite repeated appeals for justice. They also said denial of minority rights weakens the democratic fabric of society.

Reaffirming faith in the Constitution, the CBCI said fundamental rights are often unjustly restricted, particularly for the poor, marginalised, Dalits and tribals.

It urged the government to ensure equality and freedom for all citizens, regardless of caste, creed or language, and encouraged youth to engage actively in democratic processes. —*PTI*

Canada must act: HM on techie's death

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

Chandan Kumar —*x*

Home Minister G Parameshwara in Bengaluru on Tuesday said the Canadian government should take stern action against those who shot dead 37-year-old techie Chandan Kumar in Toronto two days ago in a suspected targeted killing.

Hailing from Thyamagondlu village at Nelamangala on Bengaluru outskirts, Kumar was the only child of Nanda Kumar, a retired teacher.

His parents have appealed to the Centre and the Karnataka government to help bring back his body from Toronto.

Speaking to reporters in the City, Parameshwara said there is no proper information available as to why the techie was targeted.

"He was a talented person who went there and worked as a project director. Strict action should be taken in accordance with the existing laws in Canada," Parameshwara said.

Regarding bringing the body back to India, he said the matter has come to the notice of the Indian authorities. He said the State government has reached out to the Indian Embassy in Canada. —*PTI*

23K ex-Devadasis in State: Survey suggests package

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

A re-survey on former Devadasis has identified 23,395 women across 15 districts and recommended a special package for their rehabilitation, including marriage incentives, scholarships, health coverage and skill-based livelihood support. Woman and Child Development Minister Laxmi Hebbalkar submitted the report to CM Siddaramaiah on Tuesday. Conducted across three generations, the survey documented details of 90,092 family members. Bagalkot recorded the highest number of former Devadasis at at 4,189, followed by Vijayanagara, Belagavi, Koppal and Ballari. It proposed easing documentation norms in education, and health. —*PTI*

Upalokayukta acts after kite string kills man in Bidar

BIDAR, 10 FEB

The Bidar Upalokayukta has taken suo motu cognisance of a fatal kite-string accident, ordering action against district officials over alleged administrative lapses.

The case relates to a motorcyclist who died after a manja string used for flying kites got entangled around his neck in Bidar.

The incident occurred on 14 January, when Sanjeev Kumar, 48, a resident of Bombalagi village in Bidar taluk, was riding his motorcycle on National Highway 65, when his throat was slit by a manja string.

Upalokayukta Justice B Veerappa registered a complaint against the Bidar Sub-Divisional Officer Mohammed Shakeel, Basavakalyan Sub-Divisional Officer Prakash Kudari, Manna Ekhelli Assistant Sub-Inspector Mahendra Kumar, Chitaguppa Circle Inspector Srinivas Allapur, Humnabad Deputy Superintendent of Police Madolappa, and Chitaguppa Tahsildar Manjunath Panchal.

Officials were told to completely ban manja in the district and submit a report on 3 March. —*Salar News*

KIA TIES UP WITH MU SIGMA

Real-time data to power on B'luru airport

BENGALURU, 10 FEB

A strategic partnership has been announced to transform Kempegowda International Airport into a data-driven, "algorithmic" facility, officials said on Tuesday.

Under the partnership, Bangalore International Airport Ltd (BIAL) will leverage Mu Sigma's proprietary Decision Intelligence Platform, artificial intelligence and advanced analytics to unify and analyse data across operations, enabling the anticipation of passenger needs.

BIAL said in a statement the collaboration would strengthen its data-driven decision-making by integrating Mu Sigma's analytical capabilities across key passenger and operational touchpoints.

"Unified intelligence from existing systems will enable teams to proactively identify patterns, anticipate requirements and optimise service delivery in real time," it said, adding that the initiative aims to improve operational reliability, personalise passenger experiences and raise service standards.

The transformation will focus on guest-centric capabilities designed to make touchpoints across the facility more intuitive, BIAL said.

Predictive analytics will be deployed to reduce queues at retail outlets, restaurants and parking areas. Real-time demand forecasting and dynamic pricing will also be used to optimise parking and transport services, it added.

BIAL said users of the airport's Pulse App and official website, bengaluruairport.com, will receive an enhanced digital experience with personalised recommendations, loyalty rewards and timely notifications on services and offers.

Inside the terminal, location-based promotions, improved signage and curated deals will ease wayfinding for passengers, it said. —*PTI*

A Kalaburagi Congress leader purpotedly holds a gun while dancing to the viral song 'Fa9la' from 'Dhurandhar' in a reel —*x*

Cong leader makes 'Fa9la' reel with gun

KALABURAGI, 10 FEB

A Congress leader has courted trouble by making a reel replicating the popular song 'Fa9la' from the blockbuster movie 'Dhurandhar' in Kalaburagi.

Matin Patel, who is a close aide of a Congress MLA in Kalaburagi, is shown flaunting a pistol and a gun in the video. Police have begun an investigation into the matter.

In the video, Matin makes an entry in his black SUV and then dances with his friends just like Rehman Dakait (Akshaye Khanna), who in the film enters an arms dealer's camp in Balochistan and is given a rousing welcome.

"We know the person in the video. I have told officers to find out where the video was made and under which police station it falls," Kalaburagi Police Commissioner Sharanappa SD told reporters on Tuesday.

He said he has directed police to find out which weapon was used and whether it is real or not.

Police will determine whether it was a licenced gun or not and take action. —*PTI*

SFI protest turns tense at Kerala University

T'PURAM, 10 FEB

Tension gripped the Kerala University headquarters on Tuesday after the Students' Federation of India (SFI) staged a march against Vice Chancellor Mohanan Kunnummel's decision to deny permission for the university arts festival. Despite police action, including water cannons and barricades, SFI activists forced their way into the administrative building housing the Vice Chancellor's and Registrar's offices, raising slogans. Several protesters climbed over the compound wall and continued the agitation inside the premises. The protest entered its second day, also sought long-pending travelling allowance dues for sports students. SFI leaders said the protest would continue until their demands are met. *—PTI*

Bihar CM's remarks against Rabri spark ruckus in Council

PATNA, 10 FEB

Opposition members in the Bihar legislative council were on Tuesday suspended for the day and evicted by marshals after they created a ruckus, demanding an apology from Chief Minister Nitish Kumar for allegedly using foul language against their leader Rabri Devi. Trouble began soon after the House assembled around noon, when RJD MLC Abdul Qari Sohaib demanded that Kumar be summoned to the House and made to apologise for remarks made a day ago. On Monday, the opposition had been seeking the CM's response to recent incidents of rapes in the state. At one point of time, Kumar and Rabri were seen addressing each other in an animated way amid loud sloganeering, but were not audible as the mics were switched off. Rabri's son Tejashwi Yadav, said Nitish Kumar was unfit to rule the state". *—PTI*

—PTI

Sharad Pawar is recovering well, stable: Doctors

PUNE, 10 FEB

NCP (SP) president **Sharad Pawar**, who was admitted to a private hospital in Pune after suffering a chest infection, is stable and recovering well, doctors said on Tuesday. The 85-year-old Rajya Sabha MP was taken to Ruby Hall Clinic on Monday from his residence in Baramati after complaining of breathlessness and a persistent cough. Hospital trustee and physician Dr Simon Grant said Pawar's vital parameters are within normal limits and the mild discomfort noted at admission has improved with treatment.As a precaution, he remains under observation and his condition is being closely monitored. The hospital has appealed to party workers and well-wishers to avoid gathering on the premises. *—PTI*

Pappu Yadav gets bail in 30-year-old forgery case

PATNA, 10 FEB

The MP/MLA court here on Tuesday granted bail to Independent MP Pappu Yadav in a 30-year-old forgery case, but he will remain in custody due to another pending case. Yadav was arrested by Patna Police on Friday evening after a warrant was issued in connection with a 1995 case under Section 467 of the IPC. He was admitted to Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH) the next morning after falling ill. His lawyer, Shivnandan Bharti, said a fresh case was registered at Buddha Colony police station for allegedly obstructing police work, which is why Yadav remains in custody. He alleged a conspiracy by police and raised concerns over poor medical facilities at PMCH. *—PTI*

Time to impeach Rahul: BJP on Birla's notice

Rijiju says ugly scenes could have taken place if BJP MPs confronted Cong members

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The BJP on Tuesday slammed the opposition for submitting a notice for moving a resolution to remove Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla from office, saying the time has come for India to "impeach" Rahul Gandhi and the Congress from politics.

"Those who have been impeached of their consciousness are the ones who want to impeach all the constitutional posts of India," BJP national spokesperson Sambit Patra told reporters when asked about the opposition's notice.

The BJP also alleged that the Congress and its allies have been attacking constitutional institutions and posts at the behest of US-based billionaire George Soros since the BJP-NDA returned to power for a third consecutive term under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.

LoP in the Lok Sabha and Congress leader Rahul Gandhi looks at the poster being held by suspended MPs, in New Delhi, on Tuesday *—PTI*

Congress MP and chief whip K Suresh submitted the notice to the Lok Sabha Secretariat on behalf of several opposition parties, including the Congress, Samajwadi Party and the DMK.

The TMC MPs, however, did not sign the notice and were not a party to it.

Reacting sharply to the opposition's move, Patra said, "At the behest of Gandhi, an attempt was made to gherao the prime minister's seat so that they could do something to harm him, the BJP MP alleged.

"What kind of thinking is this? I think the entire country will now have to think over this. The time has come for India to impeach Rahul Gandhi and the Congress party from politics," Patra told reporters at the BJP headquarters in Delhi.

Union minister Kiren Rijiju said "very ugly scenes" could have taken place had the BJP MPs been allowed to confront the Congress members on the day Prime Minister Narendra Modi was supposed to reply to the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address in the Lok Sabha.

Commenting on the video that showed opposition women MPs coming to the treasury benches on February 4, Rijiju asked if anyone could justify the behaviour of the opposition members. *—PTI*

Removal of Speaker 'last option': TMC

TMC leader Abhishek Banerjee on Tuesday said his party has "no problem" in signing a notice for a no-confidence motion against Om Birla, but stressed that the opposition should first approach Birla with their grievances. Interacting with reporters in the Parliament House complex on Tuesday, the MP from West Bengal's Diamond Harbour said Birla should be given a chance before opposition moves a motion for his removal from the post. *—PTI*

'Jaishankar-Goyal playing ping pong over trade deal'

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The India-US interim trade deal looks more like a "pre-committed purchase agreement" that overturns every principle of reciprocity, Congress MP Shashi Tharoor said on Tuesday and slammed Union Ministers S Jaishankar and Piyush Goyal for playing "ping pong" when questions are posed.

Initiating a debate on Budget, he said, "While India may have obtained tariff reductions of one or two percentage points, no East Asian economy has agreed to deliberately dilute its trade surplus with US through guaranteed purchase commitments." *—PTI*

RaGa rebukes Penguin; says either Naravane is lying or the publisher

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Congress leader **Rahul Gandhi** on Tuesday cited a 2023 post by a former army chief claiming his book was "available now", though the publisher said the 'memoir' has not been published.

Gandhi said he believes the word of the former army chief over Penguin.

Speaking with reporters in the Parliament House complex, Gandhi read out Naravane's social media post on X, which said, "Hello friends. My book is available now. Just follow the link. Happy reading. Jai Hind."

"This is the tweet Mr Naravane has made. The point I am making is either Mr Naravane is lying, and I believe the (former) Army chief, I don't think he will lie, or Penguin is lying. Both cannot be telling the truth," Gandhi said in the Lok Sabha.

"Penguin is saying the book is not published ... Do you believe Penguin over Mr Naravane? I believe Mr Naravane," Gandhi said.

He said Naravane has made certain statements in the book that are "inconvenient" for the government and Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Meanwhile, amid the controversy, PRHI in its statement under the heading "A quick guide to how book publishing works at Penguin Random House India", the publisher said, "An announced book, a book available for pre-order, and a published book are not the same thing."

It further explained that when a book is announced, it only indicates that the publisher has shared plans to publish it in the future and that the title is not yet available for sale. *—PTI*

Shooting video: HC to hear against Himanta

NEW DELHI/GUWAHATI, 10 FEB

The Supreme Court on Tuesday agreed to consider listing a plea of Left leaders seeking action against Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma over a viral video allegedly showing him taking aim and firing with a rifle at members of the Muslim community.

A bench led by Chief Justice of India Surya Kant and Justices Joymalya Bagchi and NV Anjaria noted the urgency of the matter, with the court observing, "The problem is, as soon as elections come, part of the election is fought in the Supreme Court."

The plea, filed by CPI(M) and CPI leaders, calls for the registration of an FIR and an independent SIT probe, citing inaction by State agencies.

A 17-second BJP clip on X appears to mix real footage of Himanta Sarma with AI-generated visuals showing him shooting images of two Muslim men *—SCREENGRAB*

The controversial video, which sparked widespread condemnation, was later deleted.

Separately, the Assam Congress filed a police complaint against the BJP for circulating the "highly provocative and communal" video. The Congress, in its complaint, said the video depicted "Sarma symbolically firing at Muslims at point blank range".

Congress MLAs alleged the content targeted Bengal-origin Muslims with phrases like "foreigner free Assam." On Monday, AIMIM President Asaduddin Owaisi had lodged a complaint with Hyderabad Police, seeking criminal action against Himanta over the video.

CM FILES RS 500 CRORE DEFAMATION CASE

In a related development, CM Sarma filed a Rs 500 crore defamation suit against Congress leaders Jitendra Singh, Bhupesh Baghel, and Gaurav Gogoi.

This follows allegations made by Gogoi at a press conference claiming Sarma's family had occupied "almost 12,000 bighas of land" across the state. Sarma termed the allegations "false, malicious and defamatory." *—PTI*

No 'merit' in making PM's BA degree public: DU to HC

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Delhi University on Tuesday told the High Court here that appeals seeking disclosures about Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**'s Bachelor's degreed were aimed at sensationalizing the matter.

"I'm appearing. Notice can be only issued to sensationalise something. There is nothing in the matter. This is only to sensationalise," DU's counsel and law officer Tushar Mehta submitted before a bench of chief justice DK Upadhyaya and justice Tejas Karia.

In its 25 August ruling last year, the single bench maintained that that the university was not obliged to disclose the Prime Minister's academic records.

During the hearing on Tuesday, Mehta sought time to file written objections on the issue of delay in filing the appeals, as well as a response on merits.

Counsel for the petitioners, Shadan Farasat, urged the court to issue notice, arguing that the university had agreed to file a response on merits as well. He contended that the delay of 40 to 45 days was minor and could be condoned.

- In its 25 August ruling last year, the single bench maintained that that the university was not obliged to disclose Prime Minister Narendra Modi's academic records.

Mehta, however, countered that condoning the delay was not a simple matter.

Taking into account submissions, the court allowed the DU three more weeks to file its written objections on the issue of delay in filing the appeals and fixed 27 April as the next date of hearing. *—PTI*

Sunetra takes charge as Maharashtra Deputy CM

MUMBAI, 10 FEB

Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister Sunetra Pawar assumed her ministerial duties on Tuesday at the secretariat, 13 days after the death of her husband Ajit Pawar in a plane crash, and attended her maiden cabinet meeting.

She arrived in Mumbai from Pune earlier in the day and prayed at the Siddhivinayak temple and the memorial of BR Ambedkar at Chaityabhoomi in the Dadar area.

Accompanied by her elder son, Parth Pawar, she visited the NCP office and met party MLAs and ministers before heading to Mantralaya. She later attended her first cabinet meeting.

After assuming charge, Sunetra Pawar said on X that she felt a deep sense of trust, duty and sacrifice while taking up her new assignment.

Sunetra Pawar assumes charge as Maharashtra Deputy Chief Minister, at Vidhan Bhavan, in Mumbai, on Tuesday *—PTI*

Sunetra took oath as the state's first woman Deputy CM on 31 December, three days after her husband was killed in the air crash in Pune district.

She was allotted the portfolios of Excise, Sports and Youth Affairs and Minorities Development and Auqaf held earlier by her husband.

Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis on Tuesday said leaders from the two NCP factions will settle the issue of their merger, and that BJP will comment on it only after a decision is made. *—PTI*

BJP, Sena (UBT) join hands for Chandrapur mayor post

CHANDRAPUR, 10 FEB

The Congress, which was set to get its mayor in the Chandrapur Municipal Corporation, faced a setback on Tuesday after BJP corporator Sangeeta Khandekar was elected to the post with Shiv Sena (UBT) support.

Shiv Sena (UBT) corporator Prashant Danav was elected the deputy mayor.

The Congress emerged as the largest party with 27 seats in the 66-member civic body, while the BJP came second with 23, prompting a race between the two parties to cobble a coalition to get the mayor and deputy mayor posts.

The Uddhav-led Shiv Sena (UBT) had won six seats, three for the Bharatiya Shetkari Kamgar Paksh (Janvikas Sena), two for the VBA, one each for AIMIM, BSP and Shiv Sena. Two independents also won the polls, the results of which were declared on 16 January. BJP's Khandekar edged out her nearest rival by one vote to clinch mayor's post with Shiv Sena (UBT). *—PTI*

MNS COUNTERS RSS CHIEF'S STAND ON LANGUAGE ROWS

Maharashtra Navnirman Sena (MNS) President Raj Thackeray said on Monday that if RSS Chief Mohan Bhagwat is of the opinion that protesting for one's language is a "disease," then most Indian states suffer from it. Raj also claimed on X that those who attended Bhagwat's programme here on 7-8 February to mark the RSS centenary came as they feared Modi's government. *—PTI*

AJIT PAWAR'S SON'S FIRM CHALLENGES STAMP DUTY NOTICE

A firm of Parth Pawar, son of late deputy CM Ajit Pawar, has appealed against the state registration department's notice asking to pay stamp duty of Rs 21 crore for the sale deed of a land at Mundhwa in Pune by Tuesday. It had asked Amadea Enterprises LLP and its partner, Digvijay Patil, to pay the stamp duty, which was waived during the execution of the sale deed for 40-acre government land. *—PTI*

AMID OUTCRY

'Ghooskhor Pandat' to be renamed

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Netflix India on Tuesday informed the Delhi High Court that the Manoj Bajpayee-starrer film, 'Ghooskhor Pandat', will be renamed.

The statement was made before Justice Purushaindra Kumar Kaurav, who was dealing with a petition seeking a stay on the release of the film on account of its "offensive" and "defamatory" title.

"The producer has taken a conscious decision in light of the concern that has arisen to change the title of the film from 'Ghooskhor Pandat' to an alternate title which more accurately reflects the film's narrative and intent," recorded Justice Kaurav in the order.

Actor Manoj Bajpayee *—PTI*

- In view of the stand taken by Netflix, the court closed the proceedings on the petition, stating that "nothing more was required to be adjudicated".

'Ghooskhor Pandat' is produced by filmmaker Neeraj Pandey.

Netflix's senior counsel further said the film, which is in editing stage, is a fictional police drama, and the title led to "unintended interruptions" which did not align with the film's content.

The court was informed that all promotional material has also been taken down.

In view of the stand taken by Netflix, the court closed the proceedings on the petition, observing that "nothing more was required to be adjudicated".

Additional Solicitor General Chetan Sharma, appearing for the Centre, said the government was informed that all promotional content had been taken down.

Netflix's announcement of the film, directed and produced by filmmaker Neeraj Pandey, earlier this month sparked a storm on social media, with many users terming the title 'casteist' and offensive. *—PTI*

T'gana polls: BJP protests as candidate dies by suicide

HYDERABAD, 10 FEB

A BJP candidate contesting the municipal elections allegedly died by suicide in Narayanpet District on Tuesday, police said.

Mahadevappa, 45, contesting for the councillor post, hanged himself to the ceiling fan at his house in Makthal at around 4.30am, they said. As of now, there is no prima facie evidence of abetment, but police are investigating from all angles, a senior police official said. There is no specific allegation from the family members of the deceased, the official said.

Director General of Police (DGP) B Shivadhar Reddy told reporters here that a case has been registered. "No suicide note was found," Police said.

Following the incident, the BJP held a protest at the Telangana DGP office and they were taken into custody by police. The BJP workers who tried to force their way inside the DGP office were prevented by police.

State BJP President N Ramchander Rao alleged that threats by the ruling Congress and the supporters of state Sports Minister Vakiti Srihari drove the BJP candidate to take the extreme step. *—PTI*

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, or SAHAI at 080-25497777 for support

Tempo van driver crushed to death in North Delhi

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

A 35-year-old tempo van driver was killed when a car collided with his vehicle while he was repairing a punctured tyre on the Outer Ring Road. Vijay, from Nangloi, was placing a jack when a Honda Brio, driven by Deepak Grover, failed to notice the parked tempo near the central verge. Vijay's head was crushed, and he died instantly. Grover, a 31-year-old from Ghaziabad, claimed he failed to see the tempo. A case has been registered under Sections 281 and 106(1) of the BNS. Vijay leaves behind a daughter and son. —PTI

— PTI

Hyd techie held for burglaries, gold recovered

VISAKHAPATNAM, 10 FEB

Hyderabad-based software professional Acchi Mahesh Reddy, alias Sunny, was arrested for involvement in 26 house burglaries across Visakhapatnam. Police recovered gold, silver worth over Rs 15 lakh, a BMW, and tools used for break-ins. Reddy, suspected of receding during the day, targeted homes at night, avoiding fingerprints. His vehicle was used for crimes, and he has a criminal history since juvenile jail at age 15. He is now under preventive detention for one year, with police linking him to over Rs 25 lakh worth of stolen property. —PTI

Paid leave for terminally ill teachers in Goa

PANAJI, 10 FEB

The Goa government has introduced a policy granting teachers up to one year of paid leave if diagnosed with terminal illnesses. The policy applies to all government and aided school teachers, subject to certification by a recognised medical authority. Eligible illnesses include advanced cancer, organ failure, ALS, and neurodegenerative disorders. Teachers must submit medical certificates, and their service benefits will remain unaffected during leave. The order aims for strict, timely, and non-discriminatory implementation across all schools in Goa. —PTI

Five of family found dead in Mathura

MATHURA, 10 FEB

Five members of a family, including three minor children, were found dead inside their home in Mathura's Khapparpur village on Tuesday, with police suspecting mass suicide. The dead are Manish Kumar, 35, a farmer, his wife, 32, and their children, Honey, 8, Priyanshi, 5, and Prateek, 3, Senior SP Shlok Kumar said. Police recovered a suicide note, a video recorded by Manish on his phone and a message written on a wall. Manish said he and his wife were ending their lives willingly. The incident came to light after Manish's brother broke open the door when the children did not come out in the morning. —PTI

Help is available. Please call Tele Manas at 14416, or SAHAI at 080-25497777

Security personnel gather as smoke billows after armed miscreants allegedly set fire to houses, at Litan Sareikhong village, in Ukhrul district of Manipur —PTI

Internet blocked, curfew on in Manipur's Ukhrul

Tension as miscreants burn houses, shoot

IMPHAL, 10 FEB

In a fresh bout of violence over the alleged assault of a Tangkhul Naga community member in Manipur's Ukhrul, several abandoned houses were set on fire and shots fired on Tuesday, prompting the state government to suspend internet services in the district for five days, police said.

The fresh firing and arson in the Litan Sareikhong area comes a day after two Tangkhul Naga organisations restricted the movement of Kukis in Ukhrul and Kamjong districts.

The Manipur government on Tuesday ordered suspension of internet, including services through broadband, VPN and VSAT in the revenue jurisdiction of Ukhrul district for five days, he said.

Locals, who fled their residences, confronted security forces for their alleged failure to stop firing in the area. A video clip that went viral on social media shows thick smoke engulfing the hill area.

Hundreds of Kuki and Tangkhul Naga villagers, mostly women, children and elderly persons, have been fleeing the Litan Sareikhong and neighbouring Kuki villages for the last two days to safe places in Kangpokpi and Ukhrul districts, another official said.

"Several villagers have taken shelter at Motbung and parts of Saikul in Kuki-majority Kangpokpi district," he said.

Manipur minister Govindas Konthoujam had on Monday said at least 21 houses had been burnt and the situation remained tense.

Meanwhile, two drivers, who were stranded at Lamlai Chingphei Kuki village under the Litan Police Station limits after their trucks broke down, were rescued on Monday.

Two Tangkhul Naga organisations, Katho Long and Katho Katamnao Long, have banned the movement of Kukis in Ukhrul and the adjoining Kamjong district.

Meanwhile, three militants belonging to a proscribed outfit were arrested for their alleged involvement in a bomb explosion in Imphal West district three days ago, police said. They were apprehended from Imphal East and West districts. —PTI

KANPUR LAMBORGHINI CRASH

Father, lawyer say tycoon's son wasn't driving

KANPUR, 10 FEB

The investigation into the Lamborghini crash took a contentious turn on Tuesday after tobacco baron's son Shivam Mishra's lawyer claimed that his client was not driving the luxury car when it hit pedestrians on VIP Road. But the police said CCTV footage, eyewitness accounts and other evidence clearly place him behind the wheel.

His father, K K Mishra, who owns Banshidhar Exports Pvt Ltd, also made similar claims before the media and alleged that his son was being false implicated in the case. "Our driver Mohan was driving the car," he told the media.

Earlier, Shivam's counsel, Mrityunjay Kumar, also told the reporters the same thing.

K K Mishra also ruled out over-speeding and asserted that his son was not drunk. "No one drinks (alcohol) in our family," the tobacco baron said. On Monday, as speculation swirled that Shivam may have been inebriated, his family stepped in to say that he has been suffering from epilepsy. K K Mishra said that Shivam is unwell and is admitted to a hospital in Delhi.

Shivam Mishra, who was allegedly driving the car —ANI

When asked about Kanpur Police Commissioner Raghubir Lal's statement that CCTV footage and other evidence indicated Shivam was driving, Mishra dismissed the claim as incorrect.

The Kanpur Police, however, dismissed the father and lawyer's claim, maintaining that the investigation so far has confirmed Shivam Mishra to be the driver at the time of the crash. — PTI

People gather around the Lamborghini which collided with a rickshaw, injuring three people in Kanpur on Sunday —PTI

Sambhal mosque: HC stays FIR against cops

PRAYAGRAJ, 10 FEB

The Allahabad High Court on Tuesday stayed a Sambhal court's order to register an FIR against some policemen, including former Sambhal circle officer Anuj Kumar Chaudhary, for allegedly firing into a crowd.

The order was passed by Justice Samit Gopal while hearing a petition filed by Chaudhary, against whom an FIR was ordered on 9 January by the Sambhal chief judicial magistrate. After the stay, the court posted the matter for hearing on 24 February.

The case stems from a complaint by Yameen, who had moved an application before then CJM Vibhanshu Sudheer, who allowed the application under Section 173(4) of BNSS.

In his complaint, Yameen alleged that on 24 November 2024, at about 8.45 am, Alam, his son, was selling rusks and biscuits on his thela near Jama Masjid, Mohalla Kot, Sambhal, when some policemen fired into the crowd with the intention to kill.

Sambhal Kotwali in-charge Anuj Kumar Tomar and Anuj Chaudhary were named in the petition.

In its 11-page order, Sudheer observed that the police cannot invoke the "official duty" shield for criminal acts.

Referring to the Supreme Court's rulings, the CJM noted that firing at a person cannot be considered discharge of official duties.

Finding that a prima facie cognizable offence was disclosed, the CJM court concluded that the truth could only be unearthed through a proper investigation. —PTI

SC relief for VYAPAM whistleblower

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Supreme Court on Tuesday quashed charges of caste-based violence against a whistleblower in the Madhya Pradesh VYAPAM examination scam.

Anand Rai had challenged the Madhya Pradesh high court order upholding the framing of charges in a case of caste-based atrocities arising from alleged violence and abuse against an MP, MLA and government officials during a rally in 2022.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and N K Singh pronounced the verdict on a plea of Rai and said, "We have discussed the scope of the SC/ST Act and the action is not in accordance with law. Appeal allowed."

Senior advocate Kapil Sibal and advocate Sumeer Sodhi appeared for Rai, an ophthalmologist from Madhya Pradesh and one of the whistleblowers in the VYAPAM examination scam.

The incident took place on 15 November 2022, at Dharad village in Madhya Pradesh's Ratlam district during a programme organised on the occasion of Birsa Munda Jayanti for the unveiling of a statue of Bhagwan Birsa Munda. It was alleged that Rai stopped the vehicles of a MP, an MLA, the collector and other officials. The FIR lodged by a person called Vikas Pargi alleged that a group blocked the road for nearly an hour, abused the lawmakers and engaged in a scuffle with the police. Rai was named among approximately 40-45 persons identified in the FIR and charges were framed against him on 18 March 2025 by the special sessions judge (SC/ST Act) of Ratlam.

On 13 January 2023, the SC granted bail to Rai and stayed the trial under the SC/ST Act. —PTI

I-PAC ED raid: SC adjourns hearing

The Supreme Court on Tuesday adjourned to 18 February the hearing on a plea moved by the ED alleging obstruction by the West Bengal government, including by Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, during its search at the I-PAC office and the premises of its director in connection with an alleged coal pilferage scam. Justices Prashant Kumar Mishra and Sandeep Mehta deferred the matter after it was informed that senior advocate Kapil Sibal was unwell. Solicitor General Tushar Mehta agreed to the adjournment. —PTI

Probe missing kids' cases, Centre told

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Supreme Court on Tuesday asked the Centre to ascertain whether there is a nationwide network or a state-specific group behind the incidents of children going missing from different parts of the country.

Justices B V Nagrathna and Ujjal Bhuyan emphasised the need to ascertain whether there is a pattern behind these incidents and asked the Centre to collate data from all states.

Additional Solicitor General Aishwarya Bhati, appearing for the Centre, said some states have given their data on missing children, but around a dozen states have not given.

The bench was hearing a PIL filed by an NGO, 'Guria Swayam Sevi Sansthan', about missing kids. —PTI

'Jana Nayagan' producers withdraw petition in HC

CHENNAI, 10 FEB

The Madras High Court on Tuesday permitted the producers of Tamil film 'Jana Nayagan', starring actor-turned-politician Vijay, to withdraw their petition, which sought a direction to the CBFC to grant a censor certificate to the film.

Justice P T Asha granted permission to M/s KVN Productions LLP, producers of the movie, to withdraw the petition. The judge dismissed the petition as "withdrawn."

The judge had on 9 January allowed the petition filed by M/s KVN Productions LLP and gave a direction to the CBFC to grant a censor certificate forthwith. The judge had also quashed a communication dated 5 January of the Regional Officer, informing the producers of the film that based on a complaint, the Chairperson of the Censor Board had referred the matter to the revising committee.

However, on the same day, Chief Justice M M Shrivastava and Justice G Arul Murugan stayed her order on an appeal filed by CBFC. — PTI

Justice P T Asha allowed KVN Productions LLP, the producers of 'Jana Nayagan,' to withdraw their petition —ANI

Tirupati laddu scam: ED files case

AMARAVATI/NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Enforcement Directorate has registered a money laundering case to probe an alleged ghee adulteration scam linked to the preparation of 'laddu prasadam' at the Tirumala temple in Tirupati, officials said.

The ED booked a case under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) sometime back to probe the alleged proceeds of crime or illicit funds generated by the accused, they said.

The ED is looking at the FIR, documents and chargesheet filed recently in the case by a CBI-led SIT, the officials said.

The SIT has named 36 people, including nine Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD) officials and five dairy experts, as accused in the matter.

As per the findings of the Special Investigation Team, the original material which was sold to the Sri Venkateswara Swamy temple body as ghee was chemically processed palmolein oil and other ingredients. —PTI

Meghalaya blast claims two more

SILCHAR, 10 FEB

The death toll in the coal mine blast in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district has climbed to 30, with two more persons succumbing to injuries at a hospital here, an official said on Tuesday.

Both were residents of Katigorah in Assam's Cachar district and were undergoing treatment at the Silchar Medical College and Hospital (SMCH). Altogether, nine injured miners were admitted to the SMCH after the February 5 incident. The blast had occurred at an illegally operated coal mine in the Mynsngat village in Meghalaya. The Meghalaya government has ordered a an inquiry into the incident to ascertain the circumstances behind the blast. — PTI

Search and rescue operation underway after an explosion in an illegal coal mining site in the East Jaintia Hills district of Meghalaya —PTI

Kanpur hospital's licence revoked after baby's death

KANPUR, 10 FEB

Authorities have cancelled the registration of a private nursing home in the Bithoor area of Kanpur after a newborn girl died when a warmer machine allegedly caught fire inside its Neonatal Intensive Care Unit (NICU), police said.

An FIR has been registered for causing death by negligence against an unidentified doctor of Raja Nursing Home, following the incident on Sunday. DCP (West) SM Qasim Abidi said the case was filed, based on a complaint filed by the infant's aunt.

An inquiry ordered by District Magistrate Jitendra Pratap Singh found that the facility was operating its NICU without mandatory approval from the health department.

"Running an NICU requires specialised equipment and staff. This negligence cost the newborn her life," a health official added. — PTI

DINDIGUL CROW DEATHS

TN officials play down bird flu fear

DINDIGUL, 10 FEB

Residents of Vedasandur in the district raised apprehensions over the crow deaths reported over the last few days, sources said. However, a health official on Tuesday said that there were not so many deaths as reported in the media and allayed fears of bird flu.

While there have been deaths of one or two crows during the recent past, on 8 February alone, about six to seven crows died, leading to some anxious moments among the public.

The Vedasandur taluk in the district is home to several decade-old trees, including neem, tamarind and peepal, attracting large number of birds such as mynas, crows and cuckoos, officials said.

On 6 February, the Tamil Nadu government sounded an alert following reports of crow deaths in various parts of the state, triggering concerns over a potential outbreak of avian influenza. The Department of Animal Husbandry has directed its officials to intensify surveillance to detect any unusual sickness or mortality among crows, migratory birds and poultry. —PTI

Probe into transfer of land near U'khand IMA for Islamic institution

DEHRADUN, 10 FEB

The transfer of nearly 20 acres of land near the Indian Military Academy (IMA) is under investigation amid allegations it was intended for an Islamic educational institution. The land, supposedly allotted two decades ago during the Congress government, is now being sold in smaller plots for residential development, raising security concerns for the military training facility.

Vikasnagar Sub-Divisional Magistrate Vinod Kumar stated that the Dhaulas land is being encroached upon, threatening the IMA's security. Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said his government would take strong action.

Reacting, Congress leader Harish Rawat said the matter dates back to 2004, when Narayan Dutt Tiwari was chief minister.

BJP MLA Vinod Chamoli accused the Congress of conspiracy. — PTI

RAMADAN PREP

A worker prepares vermicelli at a factory in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj ahead of the holy month of Ramadan on Tuesday. Ramadan, the ninth and holiest month of the Islamic lunar calendar, is observed by Muslims through fasting from dawn to dusk for about 30 days and commemorates the first revelation of the Holy Quran to Prophet Muhammad —*PTI*

No bid to remove LS Speaker has ever been successful

Several opposition parties have come together to move a resolution seeking the removal of Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, escalating tensions during the ongoing Budget session of Parliament. A notice to introduce the resolution was submitted by opposition members on Tuesday afternoon, according to sources in the Lok Sabha Secretariat, which said the notice would be examined and processed in accordance with parliamentary rules.

While there have been attempts in the past to remove a Lok Sabha Speaker, none has ever succeeded, largely due to the ruling government's numerical strength in the House.

Under parliamentary procedure, a notice for the Speaker's removal must be signed by at least two Lok Sabha members, though any number may endorse it. The Speaker can be removed through a simple majority resolution passed by the House, as provided under Article 94(c) of the Constitution.

Former Lok Sabha Secretary General PDT Achary explained that the majority is calculated based on the effective total membership of the House, excluding vacancies, rather than members present and voting, which is the norm for most motions. "All the members of the House are counted to compute the majority," he said.

The notice must be submitted to the Lok Sabha Secretary General, not to the Deputy Speaker or any other authority. It is then subjected to preliminary scrutiny to determine its admissibility. "At the threshold itself, there is a process of admissibility. At that stage, it is seen whether it contains very specific charges," Achary said, adding that such specificity is essential to enable the Speaker to respond.

The proposed resolution must also avoid defamatory language or content. Article 96 of the Constitution grants the Speaker the opportunity to defend himself or herself on the floor of the House.

Ordinarily, the language of such a resolution is examined by the Deputy Speaker. However, as the current Lok Sabha does not have one, the task may fall to the senior-most member of the panel of chairpersons, who assist the Speaker in presiding over proceedings in his absence. "The Speaker examining a resolution that seeks his removal looks absurd," Achary remarked, noting that the rules are silent on this specific situation.

Once procedural scrutiny is completed, the resolution can be taken up by the House, but only after a minimum of 14 days. At that stage, the Speaker places it before the House for consideration. The House must then "grant permission" for it to be admitted.

"The Speaker asks members in favour of the resolution to stand up. If 50 members rise in support, the House is deemed to have granted permission," Achary explained. Once admitted, the resolution must be discussed and disposed of within 10 days. Although precedents exist for moving such resolutions, none has ever been adopted. "The reason is simple: governments have always had the majority," Achary said. The move comes against the backdrop of repeated confrontations between the opposition and the ruling BJP during the Budget session. The immediate trigger was Speaker Birla's decision to stop Congress leader Rahul Gandhi from quoting an article that referred to an unpublished memoir by former Army chief General MM Naravane.

On 4 February, LS Speaker Om Birla advised OM Narendra Modi not to attend the House, citing information that some Congress MPs might rush to the Prime Minister's seat and 'resort to an unprecedented incident' —*PTI*

During the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address, the House descended into chaos after Gandhi refused to move on and repeatedly attempted to quote excerpts relating to the 2020 Galwan Valley clash with China from the memoir. The Speaker subsequently suspended eight Congress MPs for persistent disruptions.

On 4 February, Birla also advised Prime Minister Narendra Modi not to attend the House for his scheduled speech, citing information that some Congress MPs might rush to the Prime Minister's seat and "resort to an unprecedented incident". Rahul Gandhi rejected this claim, asserting that the Prime Minister avoided Parliament due to the issues being raised by the opposition. "The issue began a few days ago when the Naravane book came up. The government did not want me to discuss it and therefore stalled the House," Gandhi said.

"The fact is very clear. The Prime Minister was afraid to come to the House, not because of the members, but because of what I was saying. He is still afraid because he cannot face the truth," he added.

The confrontation deepened on Monday when a group of women Congress MPs wrote a strongly worded letter to Speaker Birla, accusing him of making "false, baseless and defamatory allegations" against them.

"It is extremely unfortunate that you, as the Hon'ble Speaker of the Lok Sabha, have been forced by the ruling party to make false and defamatory allegations against women Members of Parliament belonging to the Opposition."

Despite the political escalation, the resolution faces long odds. In the 543-member Lok Sabha, the BJP-led National Democratic Alliance (NDA) holds 293 seats, comfortably above the majority mark. The opposition INDIA bloc has 238 seats, leaving it well short of the numbers required to remove the Speaker. Even so, the move underscores the deepening confrontation between the government and the opposition, and signals that parliamentary proceedings are likely to remain contentious in the days ahead. —*PTI*

SALAR ساہر

India ranks 91 of 182 nations on corruption index

India has been ranked 91st out of 182 countries and territories in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2025, with a score of 39, highlighting persistent challenges in tackling public-sector corruption. The latest index, released on Tuesday, by global anti-corruption watchdog Transparency International, points to stagnating progress across the Asia-Pacific region and a broader global decline in governance standards.

The Asia-Pacific region recorded an average score of 45 out of 100, indicating that corruption levels have remained largely unchanged over the past decade. Transparency International warned that weak law enforcement, opaque political funding and unaccountable leadership continue to undermine governance across many countries in the region.

Widespread frustration over corruption and limited accountability triggered protests in several countries in 2025, particularly among younger populations. According to the CPI report, public anger was driven by leaders' failure to deliver effective governance, public services and economic opportunities.

In the Philippines, which scored 32 and ranked 120th, public outrage intensified following allegations that funds were siphoned off from a fake flood relief project. Indonesia, scoring 34 and ranked 109th, witnessed violent anti-government protests that resulted in deaths and injuries. In Nepal, which also scored 34 and ranked 109th, mass demonstrations over corruption and restrictions on social media culminated in the fall of the government.

"In many countries across Asia Pacific, good governance is being undermined by weak law enforcement, unaccountable leadership and opacity in political funding," said Ilham Mohamed, Transparency International's Asia-Pacific Adviser. He added that democracies, which typically perform better on anti-corruption measures than autocracies or flawed democracies, are now showing worrying declines.

The report found that this downward trend spans countries including the United States (64), Canada (75) and New Zealand (81), as well as several European nations such as the United Kingdom (70), France (66) and Sweden (80). Another alarming pattern identified was the shrinking of civic space, with increasing restrictions on freedoms of expression, association and assembly. Since 2012, 36 of the 50 countries with significant declines in CPI scores have also experienced reductions in civic freedoms.

The year 2025 saw a wave of Gen Z-led anti-corruption protests, particularly in countries in the bottom half of the index, where scores have stagnated or declined over the past decade. Young people in countries such as Nepal and Madagascar (25) took to the streets, accusing leaders of abusing power while failing to provide basic services and economic prospects.

Globally, Transparency International said most countries are failing to control corruption, with 122 of the 182 surveyed nations scoring below 50 points. The global average fell to 42, the lowest in over a decade. Only five countries scored above 80 in 2025, down sharply from 12 a decade ago.

At the top of the rankings, Denmark retained first place with 89 points, followed by Finland and Singapore. At the bottom were South Sudan and Somalia, with nine points each, followed by Venezuela.

While the leading and trailing countries remained largely unchanged, Transparency International noted that the overall picture reflects a systemic failure of accountable leadership.

The report raised particular concerns about developments in the United States, which recorded its worst score since 2012, slipping one point to 64 and ranking 29th during the first year of President Donald Trump's second term. Transparency International warned that actions such as restricting independent voices, politicising prosecutorial decisions and undermining judicial independence send "a dangerous signal that corrupt practices are acceptable".

The organisation also criticised the US decision to freeze and weaken enforcement of the Foreign Corrupt Practices Act, arguing that it undermines global anti-bribery efforts. Additionally, cuts to US funding for overseas civil society groups were said to have weakened anti-corruption initiatives worldwide, emboldening political leaders in other countries to target NGOs and journalists.

Since 2012, 50 countries have experienced significant declines in CPI scores, including Hungary (40), Türkiye (31) and Nicaragua (14). However, 31 countries have shown notable improvement, with Estonia (76), the Seychelles (68) and South Korea (63) highlighted as positive examples.

Russia remained near the bottom with an unchanged score of 22, which Transparency International attributed to centralised and opaque governance that suppresses media and civil society. Ukraine, despite ongoing war, improved slightly to 36, following reforms prompted by an energy-sector corruption scandal. —*PTI*

—AI

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

Bangladesh election tests democracy after youth-led uprising

Bangladesh's election Thursday is the country's most consequential. It follows youth-led protests 18 months ago that overthrew the government of former prime minister Sheikh Hasina and ushered Bangladesh into an interim administration led by Nobel laureate Muhammad Yunus.

The vote, alongside a constitutional referendum on political reforms, will end the transition period and test the South Asian nation's democracy.

Many voters hope the return to elections will restore law and order, protect civil liberties and bring accountable leadership. But there is also unease. Some fear political instability, the marginalization of women and minorities, and the rise of Islamists in a secular country.

Here's a look at what Bangladeshis have been saying.

FAIR ELECTIONS AND THE RULE OF LAW ARE KEY DEMANDS

Yunus has promised to deliver a fair vote. That is a major demand among most people, many of whom regard previous elections under Hasina as rigged. Those concerns, including a clampdown on opposition parties, were a major factor that eventually exploded in a student-led uprising that ended Hasina's 15-year-long rule and sent her to exile in India.

"I don't want any more bad incidents in Bangladesh, or a war like situation," said Arefin Labib, referring to the 2024 uprising which was met with a brutal crackdown by security forces, killing hundreds of people.

Labib hopes that a newly elected government might finally restore stability to Bangladesh and guide the nation toward a better future.

"If the country wants to run smoothly, then a fair election is needed," he said.

Much of this sentiment is shared by many Bangladeshis, especially after Hasina's ouster was followed by rising political violence, attacks on Hindu minorities, and a collapse of law and order on the streets.

"I want the government to prevent riots, killings, and any other trouble in the country," said 62-year-old street vendor Zainul Abedeen.

A CALL FOR A RETURN TO DEMOCRACY

There is broader consensus that Yunus' interim government steadied an economy that had been in free fall, but many say it failed to restore security and protect human rights, and neglected the safety of religious minorities,

Dhaka resident Rajit Hasan said that while the interim government made efforts to stabilise the situation, it ultimately fell short of delivering the deep reforms and accountability many had hoped for.

"The government just tried, but the political situation was so fragmented, so fragile, that it just couldn't sort it out," he said.

Hasan wants the transition to bring stronger access to justice, genuine protection of civil liberties, and the freedom for people to practice their religion and exercise their rights. He also called for accountable leadership, independent institutions, and a political culture where dissent is respected rather than suppressed.

"We want democracy. We want our rights. We want the rule of law. That's what we are looking for," he said.

Commuters travel on rickshaws in a market on the eve of national election in Dhaka, Bangladesh —*PTI*

CONCERN AMONG WOMEN OVER REPRESENTATION

or years, Bangladesh stood out globally for being governed by women prime ministers — Khaleda Zia for two full terms and Hasina for four. It gave many women a sense of representation. That legacy, however, is under threat.

Hasina and her party are banned from participating in the election. Meanwhile, there are fewer women contesting than before, despite the pivotal role women protesters played in the uprising that paved the way for the election.

Economics student Wasima Binte Hussain, who took part in the uprising, said she had hoped the political transition would open more space for women.

But she has found the reality discouraging. Female leadership remains scarce, and issues affecting women have yet to get the attention she expected, she said.

"One of my primary hope was that there will be more women leaders ... and women issues would be prioritized more. It hasn't been prioritized that much," she said.

RISE OF ISLAMISTS LEADS TO WORRIES

These worries have grown alongside a surge of support in Bangladesh for Jamaat-e-Islami, an Islamist group that was banned under Hasina but has gained influence since her ouster.

The party's rise has alarmed many women, especially after its leaders suggested restricting women's activities and questioned their ability to work because of their childbearing role. The party, however, insists that it would rule moderately if it comes to power.

Sayma Nowshin Suha, 22, said the prospect of Jamaat-e-Islami gaining power is deeply frightening for young women like her because of its conservative politics. She said she dreams of a Bangladesh where people are free to live their lives as they see fit, without fear or restriction.

"In Bangladesh," she said, "conservatism is the scariest thing." —*PTI*

PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA

Netanyahu to meet Trump over Iran on Wednesday

TEL AVIV, 10 FEB

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu will meet US President Donald Trump in Washington on Wednesday to advocate for expanding nuclear negotiations with Iran. Netanyahu aims to include limits on ballistic missiles and Iran's support for militant groups like Hamas and Hezbollah. His visit follows indirect talks between US and Iranian officials and comes amid ongoing military buildup and recent protests in Iran. Netanyahu, who faces elections later this year, seeks to influence the process and bolster his standing at home. His government, the most nationalist in Israel's history, is expected to remain until October. —*PTI*

Aus protests Israeli President's visit to Bondi Beach

SYDNEY, 10 FEB

Australian police have defended their actions following violent clashes with protesters during a demonstration against Israeli President Isaac Herzog's visit in Sydney. Video footage showed police charging and punching protesters, with a state MP among those injured. Police reported 27 arrests, nine charges, and 10 officers assaulted. NSW Police Commissioner Mal Lanyon stated officers showed "remarkable restraint" and "did what they needed to do". Protest organisers failed in court to overturn police powers limiting demonstrations. The government invited Herzog after the Bondi Beach shooting, which claimed 16 lives, claiming it would aid Jewish communal healing, despite objections from pro-Palestinian groups. Tensions escalated as police deployed pepper spray during the confrontations. —*AGENCIES*

Air Canada halts Cuba flights due to fuel shortage

TORONTO, 10 FEB

Air Canada announced on Monday it is suspending flights to Cuba due to a fuel shortage on the island. The airline made the decision after the Cuban government declared that aviation fuel would no longer be available at Cuban airports from Tuesday. Cuba has been struggling with a growing energy crisis amid a US blockade of oil. Canadian tourism is crucial to Cuba's economy, and Canada is Cuba's second-largest source of direct investment, especially in mining and tourism sectors affected by pandemic downturns. Air Canada plans to send empty flights southbound to retrieve about 3,000 passengers. Meanwhile, Air Transat, WestJet, and Sunwing intend to continue flights as scheduled despite the fuel shortage. —*PTI*

IS-linked rebels kill 20 in Congo

KINSHASA, 10 FEB

Rebels allied with the Islamic State group killed at least 20 people in an attack on a village in eastern Congo over the weekend, the military reported. The assault by the Allied Democratic Forces (ADF) occurred early Saturday in Mambimbi-Isigo, Lubero territory, North Kivu province. Military administrator Col. Alain Kiwewa Mitela said there was no immediate comment from the ADF. The attack caused mass displacement, worsening an already severe humanitarian crisis. Civil society activists said rebels raided farmers' fields before attacking civilians with knives and firearms. Civil society leader Kinos Kitwa criticised the small number of Congolese army troops in the area. Since January, ADF fighters have killed at least 62 civilians in eastern Congo. —*PTI*

US slashes tariffs on Bangladesh to 19 per cent

No duty for B'desh clothes made from American materials

DHAKA, 10 FEB

Bangladesh has secured a reduced 19 per cent tariff under a trade agreement with the US, interim government Chief Advisor Muhammad Yunus said on X on Monday. There would be a zero duty for some clothes and textiles that are made with US-produced materials, such as cotton and human-made fabrics.

Yunus said Washington had "committed to establishing a mechanism for certain textile and apparel goods from Bangladesh using US-produced cotton and man-made fibre to receive zero reciprocal tariff in (the) US market".

Yunus said the deal was reached after nine months of negotiations since April last year.

Dhaka will also open its markets to a wider range of American goods, a joint statement released by the White House said.

Bangladesh Commerce Ministry officials said apart from cotton, the deal includes provisions for importing US wheat, soybean, and LNG, refraining from imposing tariffs on e-commerce, complying with US-mandated intellectual property rights standards, and supporting US proposals for reforming the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

The garment industry is the backbone of Bangladesh's economy, and the US is the biggest destination for such goods —*PTI*

Dhaka will also recognise American food and drug and vehicle safety and emission rules, making it easier for US goods to enter the country.

The clothing and textile industry is the backbone of Bangladesh's economy. The country is the second largest exporter of clothes after China. According to Bangladesh's Export Promotion Bureau (EPB), the US remains Bangladesh's largest export market.

Bangladesh recently agreed to purchase 25 aircraft from US aerospace giant Boeing, with an estimated cost of T k 30,000-35,000 crore as part of broader efforts to ease the US tariffs.

US President Donald Trump had earlier imposed 37 per cent tariffs on Bangladesh, before cutting it down to 20 per cent later.

The one per cent drop reduction in Monday's trade deal might seem insignificant, but it caused panic in India's textile industry because of the zero duty clause for apparel goods, giving Bangladesh a competitive edge compared to New Delhi.

The deal comes just before the 12 February election. —*Agencies*

Vote Yes for B'desh referendum: Yunus

DHAKA, 10 FEB

Bangladesh's interim government Chief Muhammad Yunus on Monday urged voters to back a 'Yes' vote in the 12 February referendum, to be held alongside the general elections, endorsing his proposed reform package.

Addressing senior secretaries and top bureaucrats as campaigning ended at midnight, Yunus said a 'Yes' outcome would help build Bangladesh's future "in a more positive way" and prevent a return to "misrule."

The interim administration has actively campaigned for public support for the 84-point reform package, known as the "July National Charter-2025." Commercial banks displayed 'Yes' banners at government offices following a Bangladesh Bank directive, while banks were also asked to use CSR funds to support NGO campaigns.

However, legal experts have questioned the government's partisan role, arguing it should remain neutral. Some jurists also challenged the referendum's legitimacy, noting that Bangladesh's Constitution has no provision for such a process. —*PTI*

Starmer refuses to step down over Epstein scandal

LONDON, 10 FEB

British Prime Minister Keir Starmer vowed Monday to fight for his job amid the scandal that has broken out over former UK ambassador to Washington Peter Mandelson's ties to late convicted sex offender Jeffrey Epstein.

The Prime Minister's authority with his own Labour Party has been battered by fallout from the publication of files related to Epstein — a man he never met.

Some lawmakers in Starmer's centre-left Labour Party have called on him to resign for appointing Mandelson. Instead, Starmer's chief of staff Morgan McSweeney resigned.

However, during a meeting with Labour lawmakers in Parliament, Starmer said he will not step down.

"Every fight I have ever been in, I've won," he told Labour lawmakers in Parliament. "I'm not prepared to walk away from my responsibility to my country."

Starmer fired Mandelson last September after emails were published showing that he maintained a friendship with Epstein after the financier's 2008 conviction for sex offences involving a minor.

Dozens of Labour leaders then rallied behind Starmer.

ANDREW CASE

Buckingham Palace on Monday said it "stands ready" to support a police investigation into the conduct of Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor. Thames Valley Police said it is assessing allegations that former prince Andrew passed on confidential information to Epstein in his role as the UK's trade envoy.

MUSK, ZUCKERBERG PICTURED AT PARTY

Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Tesla CEO Elon Musk, Paypall co-founder Peter Thiel, LinkedIn co-founder Reid Hoffman and other prominent tech tycoons were pictured at a dinner party with Epstein. Epstein described the 2015 party that as "wild" in an email. Musk has repeatedly claimed that he had never been to any of Epstein's parties. —*Agencies*

Trump threatens to block US-Canada bridge

WASHINGTON, 10 FEB

President Donald Trump threatened to block the opening of a bridge connecting the US and Canada, claiming that Washington has been treated "unfairly" for "decades".

The Gordie Howe International Bridge, cost at least $4 billion dollars to build and would connect Ontario to Michigan. But Trump wrote in a Truth Social post on Monday that he "will not allow this bridge to open until the US is fully compensated for everything we have given them" and the US is treated with "fairness and respect".

The 1.5-mile bridge connecting Detroit and Windsor was funded by Canada, its website says, and would be jointly operated by both states. It is not clear how Trump would block the opening of the bridge, but he said negotiations would start.

Trump blamed the bridge that he once endorsed on former president Barrack Obama. He said the bridge would give the US "absolutely nothing".

Trump said the US should own at least half the bridge.

Trump also said that Canadian Prime Minster Mark Carney wanted to make a deal with China, which would end up with Beijing banning ice hockey. —*Agencies*

Dems demand more restrictions on ICE as shutdown looms

Democratic leaders say a proposal from the White House is "incomplete and insufficient" as they demand new restrictions on Trump's immigration crackdown and threatening a shutdown of the Homeland Security Department. Leaders say the proposal doesn't address the concerns about "ICE's lawless conduct", as another partial government shutdown may begin on Saturday if a consensus is not reached. Their demands include making Immigration and Custom (ICE) officers remove their mask, reduce use of force and have stricter procedural grounds for detaining suspects.

Khamenei calls for unity on 1979 Revolution anniv

TEHRAN, 10 FEB

Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei called on Iranians to show unit on the eve of the 47th anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, saying that such resolve would "frustrate the enemy".

During the 1979 Islamic Revolution, demonstrators took to the streets and toppled the regime of Reza Shah Pahlavi, ending the monarchy in Iran. In a televised address on Tuesday, Khamenei hailed the revolution as a "great victory" and said Iran liberated itself from "foreign interference". Shah Pahlavi was seen as a stooge of the West.

Khamenei noted that "external forces have persistently sought to undo those accomplishments since then", but claimed that Iran is still standing strong. The 1979 revolution, he said, "forced those who covet Iran and its interests to retreat."

"National power is related more to the will of nations and their steadfastness than to missiles and aircraft," he said.

Khamenei's comments come after a crackdown on protesters against his regime and the falling currency. US President Donald Trump repeatedly threatened to strike Iran over the crackdown, which killed thousands, but then shifted his stance and focused more on the nuclear enrichment programme.

The US has also ramped up its military presence in the region, deploying a naval carrier and several destroyers.

However, the General Staff of the Armed Forces of Iran warned that any attack against the Islamic Republic would provoke a "more forceful and wider" response.

Meanwhile, Ali Larijani, a top Iranian security official travelled to Oman on Tuesday, where the US and Tehran negotiated the nuclear enrichment programme. He will carry Iran's response to initial round of talks. —*AGENCIES*

Stay away from Iran: US warns ships

The US Transportation Department's Maritime Administration told American ships traversing the Strait of Hormuz to "remain as far as possible from Iran's territorial sea without compromising navigational safety." The Strait is a crucial oil shipping route. If the corridor is blocked, it could cause a severe global oil crisis, such as in the 1980s during the Iran-Iraq war.

US forcing India to buy costlier oil: Russia slams trade deal

MOSCOW, 10 FEB

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov slammed the US for its efforts to "ban India and other partners" from purchasing Russian oil.

Lavrov claimed that Washington is seeking to "control our trade, investment cooperation, and military-technical ties with major strategic partners, such as India and other BRICS members."

"They are trying to ban India and our other partners from buying cheap, affordable Russian energy resources (Europe has long been banned), and are forcing them to buy US LNG at exorbitant prices," he said.

His comments come after the India-US interim trade deal, where Washington agreed to slash tariffs on New Delhi, claiming that it had curbed its purchases of Russian oil.

Lavrov said Washington has set itself the objective of achieving economic domination while they use "coercive" measures like tariffs, sanctions and direct prohibitions.

FOUR KILELD IN UKRAINE, 10 FREEZE TO DEATH

Meanwhile, Russian drone strikes in Ukraine killed at least four people on Monday. Russian attacks on Ukraine's energy infrastructure continued on Tuesday, amid one of the worst winters in the country. Millions have been left without power in the freezing cold.

At least 10 people have died of hypothermia this year due to insufficient heating, Al Jazeera reported. —*Agencies*

'Trump against Israel's move to annex West Bank'

WASHINGTON/ RAMALLAH, 10 FEB

President Donald Trump opposes Israel's "annexation" of the occupied West Bank, a United States official has said.

"A stable West Bank keeps Israel secure, and is in line with this administration's goal to achieve peace in the region," the official said on Monday. Last year, Trump said he wouldn't allow Israel to annex the West Bank.

Similarly, several Muslim-led countries and human rights groups have called the moves announced Sunday an annexation of the territory, home to roughly 3.4 million Palestinians who seek it for a future state.

The measures, approved by Netanyahu's Security Cabinet on Sunday, expand Israel's enforcement authority over land use and planning in areas run by the Palestinian Authority, making it easier for Jewish settlers to force Palestinians to give up land.

A top Israeli official called it the "de facto sovereignty" for Palestinians on Tuesday, echoing what critics call dangerous rhetoric. —*Agencies*

'LIKE A DRUG FOR KIDS'

Landmark trial begins against Meta, Google in addiction case

LOS ANGELES, 10 FEB

Comparing social media platforms to casinos and addictive drugs, a plaintiffs' lawyer on Monday accused Meta and Google of deliberately engineering products that addict children, as opening statements began in a landmark Los Angeles trial with potential ripple effects across the tech industry.

Mark Lanier, representing the plaintiffs, told jurors the case was as "easy as ABC", which stands for "addicting the brains of children", and alleged that Instagram owner Meta and YouTube parent Google knowingly designed features to keep young users hooked. TikTok and Snap, initially named in the lawsuit, have settled for undisclosed sums.

Lanier presented internal emails, documents and studies from Meta and Google, including Meta's "Project Myst" research involving 1,000 teenagers and parents. According to Lanier, the study showed children facing trauma or stress were especially vulnerable, while parental controls had limited impact. He also cited internal Google material likening products to casinos and Meta messages describing Instagram as "like a drug".

At the centre of the case is a 20-year-old plaintiff identified as KGM, one of three bellwether cases expected to shape similar lawsuits. Lanier said KGM began using YouTube at six and Instagram at nine, posting hundreds of videos before finishing elementary school, and later developed mental health problems she links to compulsive use.

Meta's lawyer Paul Schmidt countered that the trial hinges on whether social media was a "substantial factor" in KGM's struggles. He highlighted records showing emotional abuse, bullying and family conflict, and cited testimony from a mental health provider who said social media was not her primary issue.

The trial is expected to last up to eight weeks, with executives testifying later. —*PTI*

Herders collect water from a well amid water shortage caused by prolonged drought in Lopii Village, Turkana County, Kenya, on Monday —*PTI*

Severe drought leaves millions hungry in Kenya

KAMPALA, 10 FEB

Over 2 million people in parts of Kenya are facing hunger due to severe drought, with cattle-keeping communities in the northeast most affected, the United Nations reports. Emaciated livestock have been seen near the Somali border. Shorter rainy seasons have exposed communities to drought, causing livestock deaths, similar to the region's crisis between 2020 and 2023, when millions of animals died.

The UN reports four consecutive failed wet seasons in the Horn of Africa, with October-December being among the driest since 1981. Ten counties in Kenya are experiencing drought, with Mandera reaching the "alarm" level, indicating critical water shortages and livestock deaths.

The suffering extends into Somalia, Tanzania, and Uganda, where water shortages threaten millions. —*PTI*

PHOTO: XXX

Silver dips to ₹2.64L/kg; Gold rises by ₹2,200

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Silver prices declined by Rs 7,500 or nearly 3 per cent to Rs 2.64 lakh per kg in the national capital on Tuesday, while gold prices appreciated by Rs 2,200 per 10g amid a firm US dollar.

According to the All India Sarafa Association, the white metal dropped Rs 7,500 to Rs 2,64,500 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) from Monday's closing of Rs 2,72,000 per kg. On the other hand, gold of 99.9 per cent purity appreciated by Rs 2,200, or 1.4 per cent, to Rs 1,60,700 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 1,58,500 per 10g in the previous market session. In the international market, spot silver fell by USD 1.13, or 1.37 per cent, to USD 82.16 per ounce, while gold is trading marginally lower at USD 5,052.43 per ounce. —*PTI*

Rupee rises 9P to close at 90.57 against USD

MUMBAI, 10 FEB

The rupee pared initial losses and settled on a positive note on Tuesday, higher by 9 paise at 90.57 (provisional) against the US dollar, supported by positive cues from domestic equities and weakening of the American currency in the overseas market. Forex traders said the rupee is witnessing sideways price action as the support from positive domestic equities and foreign fund inflows was negated by geopolitical tensions and Dollar demand from importers. At the interbank foreign exchange market, the rupee opened at 90.63 against the US dollar, then lost some ground to touch an intraday low of 90.77 and a high of 90.48 against the greenback. Meanwhile, the dollar index was trading 0.01 per cent higher at 96.82. —*PTI*

India explores new markets for steel exports

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

India is exploring new markets for steel exports in the Middle East and various Asian nations, an official said. Several agreements are also expected with Indian companies in the next six months in this regard, the official said. "Predominantly, our exports were focused on Europe, but we (government is) are trying to diversify exports...," official told PTI. Government-to-government level dialogues are taking place with a number of countries in Middle East and Asia, he said. "We are trying to get MoUs with countries, so that we can work on these sectors. For example, for markets, the Middle East is a new area where a lot of infrastructure is coming up," official said. —*PTI*

AstraZeneca gets nod to mkt cancer drug in India

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

AstraZeneca Pharma India Ltd on Tuesday said it has received approval from India's drug regulator to market Durvalumab for an additional cancer indication. In a regulatory filing, the company said the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has cleared the import, sale and distribution of Durvalumab solution for infusion in strengths of 120 mg/2.4 ml and 500 mg/10 ml, under the brand name Imfinzi. The approval covers the use of Durvalumab in combination with carboplatin and paclitaxel as a first-line treatment for adults with primary advanced or recurrent endometrial cancer who are eligible for systemic therapy. This will be followed by maintenance treatment with Durvalumab as a monotherapy in patients with mismatch repair-deficient (dMMR) endometrial cancer. —*PTI*

Adani faces 3rd US probe over Iran-linked LPG trade

Adani Group says it has halted all LPG imports from Iran

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Adani group flagship firm on Tuesday said a US agency has sought information from the company over alleged import of petroleum products from Iran as part of a civil investigation into transactions with sanctioned entities.

Adani Enterprises Ltd said in a stock exchange filing that it received an information request from the US Treasury Department's Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) on 4 February, following voluntary discussions related to a Wall Street Journal report published in June 2025. The report had alleged that Adani-linked companies imported Iranian liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) into India using shipping routes that may have been intended to bypass US sanctions.

"The company is voluntarily engaging and fully co-operating with OFAC and will supply the requested information," it said, adding the communication received from US authority "does not contain any findings of aberrations/non-compliances."

The WSJ report in June last year stated that US prosecutors were investigating if Adani group companies

imported Iranian LPG into India through their Mundra port in Gujarat.

"By policy, the Adani Group does not handle any cargo from Iran at any of our ports. This includes any shipments originating from Iran or any vessels operating under the Iranian flag," the conglomerate had said when the news first appeared in June last year.

It had gone on to state that the group "does not manage or facilitate any ships whose owners are Iranian. This policy is strictly adhered to across all our ports".

The WSJ report claimed that its investigation had found tankers travelling between Mundra and the Persian Gulf exhibited traits experts say are common for ships evading sanctions.

Purchase of Iranian oil or products is sanctioned over Tehran's suspected nuclear programme.

Calling the report "baseless and mischievous", the Adani group had said it "categorically denies any deliberate engagement in sanctions evasion or trade involving Iranian-origin LPG".

The company said that it had stopped all LPG imports from June 2 last year and that LPG accounted for 1.46 per cent of its revenue in fiscal 2025.—*PTI*

Adani Energy secures $750M loan from two Japanese banks

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Indian billionaire Gautam Adani's Adani Energy Solutions Ltd has secured a $750 million loan from two Japanese banks Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc. and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp, pointing to the two banks growing interest in India.

Proceeds from the loan will fund Adani Energy's high voltage direct current transmission project, carrying solar power generated in Rajasthan's desert to Fatehpur, a city in the state of Uttar Pradesh, the press release said. The dollar-denominated facility has a five-year tenor and priced about 200 basis points over the benchmark Secured Overnight Financing Rate, source in know of things said. Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group Inc and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp led financing, according to a release Monday. —*Agencies*

2,587 STOCKS ADVANCE

Markets rise for 3rd straight day

MUMBAI, 10 FEB

Stock market benchmarks Sensex and Nifty rallied for the third straight session on Tuesday buoyed by firm global cues and end of tariff uncertainties over India-US trade, even as investors booked profit at higher levels.

The 30-share BSE Sensex climbed 208.17 points, or 0.25 per cent, to close at 84,273.92. During the session, the benchmark jumped 417.2 points, or 0.49 per cent, to hit an intraday high of 84,482.95.

The 50-share NSE Nifty rose 67.85 points, or 0.26 per cent, to finish at 25,935.15. In the intraday session, the index appreciated by 122.15 points, or 0.47 per cent, to high of 25,989.45.

Among the Sensex constituents, Eternal, Tata Steel, Mahindra & Mahindra, PowerGrid, Tech Mahindra, NTPC, Larsen & Toubro, Tata Consultancy Services, Maruti Suzuki India, Axis Bank, Titan and Hindustan Unilever were among the gainers. On the other hand, HCL Technologies, Bajaj Finance, Bharti Airtel, Asian Paints, HDFC Bank, UltraTech Cement, Adani Ports and ITC were among the laggards.

Total of 2,587 stocks advanced, while 1,675 declined and 145 remained unchanged on the BSE. —*PTI*

BSE shares hit 52-week high after Q3 profits

Shares of BSE Ltd rose nearly 7 per cent to hit a 52-week high on Tuesday, following a near threefold increase in consolidated profit to Rs 602 crore for the December 2025 quarter. The stock gained 6.81 per cent to Rs 3,188.40, its yearly peak, boosting BSE's market valuation by Rs 8,292.28 crore to Rs 1,30,049.75 crore. The NSE Nifty rose 100.30 points to 25,967.60. BSE's profit jumped from Rs 220 crore last year, with revenue reaching Rs 1,334 crore, up 61 per cent. —*PTI*

Money laundering case: ED issues new summons to Anil Ambani, wife

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Enforcement Directorate has issued fresh summons to Reliance Group chairman Anil Ambani and his wife Tina Ambani to appear for questioning in a money laundering case next week, officials said on Tuesday.

Tina, 68, a former actor, was asked to depose by the federal agency here on Monday but she skipped appearance.

Officials said she has now been asked to depose on 17 February followed by Anil , 66, on 18 February.

\Their statements will be recorded under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) once they depose, the officials said.

Anil was questioned by the ED once last year as part of these investigations linked to multiple Reliance Group companies and their bank loans. It is understood that Tina has been called for questioning with regard to a money trail linked to the purchase of a luxury condominium in New York's Manhattan.

The ED had recently arrested former Reliance Communication (RCOM) president Punit Garg in this case.

The New York property was "fraudulently" sold in 2023 during the corporate insolvency resolution process of RCOM by Garg, the ED had claimed in a statement earlier.

It is understood that RCOM informed the stock exchange about this "fraudulent" sale in 2025.

The ED recently also constituted a special investigation team (SIT) to probe multiple cases of alleged bank fraud and linked financial irregularities against Anil Dhirubhai Ambani Group. —*PTI*

Equity, MF inflow down 14% in Jan: Data

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Equity mutual funds attracted net inflows of Rs 24,028 crore in January, marking a 14 per cent decline from the previous month, according to data released by industry body Amfi on Tuesday.

This was the second consecutive month of moderation in equity inflows, as investor sentiment remained cautious amid subdued market conditions and ongoing geopolitical concerns.

Despite the slowdown in equity investments, the mutual fund industry's overall asset base continued to expand. Total assets under management (AUM) rose to Rs 81.01 lakh crore in January from Rs 80.23 lakh crore in December.

Overall, the industry recorded net inflows of Rs 1.56 lakh crore during the month, recovering from net outflows of Rs 66,591 crore in December, supported by inflows across multiple fund categories.

Equity inflows softened sequentially from Rs 28,054 crore in December and Rs 29,911 crore in November, although they remained higher than Rs 24,690 crore recorded in October, data showed.

Within equity schemes, flexi-cap funds led inflows with net additions of Rs 7,672 crore, followed by mid-cap funds at Rs 3,185 crore and large and mid-cap funds at Rs 3,182 crore. —*PTI*

SEBI blocks NCDEX and MSE from entering options market

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has halted the country's two newest stock exchanges, NCDEX and MSE, from offering trading in equity derivatives, urging them to first strengthen their share-trading businesses. Both exchanges had previously sought approval to develop equity cash and derivative products, according to disclosures.

NCDEX mainly trades agricultural commodities, while MSE focuses on currency derivatives with limited equity volumes. SEBI's move highlights ongoing caution amid India's soaring equity derivatives market, where premiums are about twice the size of the cash market, unlike 2-3 per cent in major global economies.

The regulator wants a minimum six-month gap between launching cash equities and derivatives and insists exchanges demonstrate sufficient liquidity and a strong underlying cash market first. Both exchanges have raised capital—NCDEX Rs 770 crore and MSE Rs 1,200 crore—to fund expansion and upgrade technology. —*Agencies*

External Commercial Borrowings of India at $44.36B in Dec

MUMBAI, 10 FEB

India's total External Commercial Borrowings (ECB) stood at USD 44.36 billion in December 2025, according to data released by the Reserve Bank of India, indicating continued reliance on overseas funding by Indian companies.

The RBI data showed that ECB proceeds were mainly used for the import of capital goods, execution of new projects, modernisation of facilities and on-lending by financial institutions. The manufacturing, financial services, infrastructure and transportation sectors accounted for a substantial share of the borrowings, reflecting sustained investment activity.

The aviation sector remained a major contributor. Air India emerged as one of the largest individual borrowers, raising USD 2.75 billion through multiple tranches with a 12-year maturity from leasing companies. The funds were fully earmarked for aircraft imports as part of the Tata Group-owned airline's fleet expansion and modernisation programme.

IndiGo raised USD 463.7 million across four borrowings with maturities of 10 to 12 years. —*ANI*

Tobacco board urges FM to revisit tax hike

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

Tobacco Board, under the administrative control of the Department of Commerce, has written a letter to Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** highlighting the adverse impact of the unprecedented increase in excise duties on cigarettes on the industry, as well as on millions of farmers and workers.

The excise hike effective February 1 has resulted in a price increase of up to 60 per cent in real terms.

Steep tax increases heightened risk of accelerated illicit

cigarette trade, which has emerged globally as a serious economic and governance challenge.

The unregulated market deprives governments of substantial tax revenues, undermines legitimate businesses, fuels organised criminal networks, and poses risks to public health and security.

"Considering the urgent industry situation and the significant impact on the farming community, I request you to intervene and revise the excessive duty rates on tobacco products," Tobacco Board Chairman Yashwanth Kumar Chidipothu said in a letter dated February 10.

The chairman, a BJP leader, said he would write to Sitharaman about tobacco farmers' plight. —*PTI*

Andhra waives Rs 20 cr fees for BPCL refinery

AMARAVATI, 10 FEB

The Andhra Pradesh government has waived stamp duty and registration fees of over Rs 20 crore to support Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd's (BPCL) proposed Greenfield refinery and petrochemical complex near Ramayapatnam Port in Nellore district.

A government order said the exemption covers the transfer of 600.4 acres of land in Chevuru village from the Andhra Pradesh Maritime Board to the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Infrastructure Corporation (APIIC), and subsequently to BPCL. The waiver includes Rs 17.6 crore in stamp duty and Rs 2.7 crore in registration fees, revenue that will be foregone by the state.

The land forms part of a larger 6,000-acre allocation approved earlier for the project under the Andhra Pradesh Industrial Development Policy 4.0. BPCL plans to invest nearly Rs 97,000 crore to set up a 9–12 million tonnes per annum refinery-cum-petrochemical complex. —*PTI*

AI IMPACT SUMMIT 2026

Security risks looms as India ranks 2nd in AI usage

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

India has emerged as a global powerhouse in artificial intelligence (AI) adoption, ranking second only to the United States in enterprise AI/ML transactions, according to a report by cloud security major Zscaler.

The findings, released in the 'Zscaler ThreatLabz 2026 AI Security Report,' come a week ahead of the high-stakes India AI Impact Summit 2026.

Zscaler pointed out that despite strong momentum in AI adoption in India, significant security challenges persist. These include the weaponisation of agentic AI and a critical gap between innovation and security measures.

The summit, expected to be a gathering of global tech leaders, policymakers, and innovators, is slated to be held in the national capital from 16-20 February and will see global tech leaders. The report, drawing on an analysis of nearly one trillion AI and machine learning transactions on the Zscaler Zero Trust Exchange platform from January to December 2025.

According to the report, Indian enterprises logged a staggering 82.3 billion AI/ML transactions between June and December 2025. This volume accounts for 46.2 per cent of all AI activity in the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, comfortably placing India as the regional leader.

AI activity in India was driven primarily by Technology & Communication (31.3 billion transactions), Manufacturing (15.7 billion), Services (12.6 billion), and Finance & Insurance sectors (12.2 billion). —*PTI*

Dirty linen being washed in court: HC to Sunjay's family

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

The Delhi High Court on Tuesday asked the mother, wife and family members of late industrialist Sunjay Kapur to stop airing their dirty laundry out in the court and "peacefully" resolve their differences.

Calling it a "sorry" situation, Justice Mini Pushkarna observed that the family members, who are in litigation with each other over their estate, were grieving and efforts should be made to be respectful of each other.

The judge therefore asked the senior counsel appearing for Sunjay Kapur's mother, wife as well as sister to sit together to resolve the issues in a manner that everyone's interest was

safeguarded.

"Any chance of mediation? Dirty linen is being washed in court. God has blessed you with financial wealth," the court said during the hearing. The court was dealing with a lawsuit by Sunjay Kapur's mother, Rani Kapur, seeking that their purported family trust be declared "null and void".

In her lawsuit against her daughter-in-law Priya Kapur and others, 80-year-old Rani Kapur has alleged that the trust, which was constituted in her name in October 2017, was a product of "forged, fabricated and fraudulent" documents and she had been wrongly divested of all her rights, assets and legacy.

During the hearing, Justice Pushkarna observed that the daughter-in-law should see that it was the plaintiff's husband who "founded everything" and fruits of his labour should be shared by all.

The court issued notice to Rani Kapur on an application by Priya Kapur seeking rejection of the lawsuit.

Sunjay Kapur passed away on 12 June after collapsing during a polo match in England. —*PTI*

ICC offers PCB concessions to avert India boycott in T20 WC

PCB demanded a tri-series featuring India-Pak-B'desh

KARACHI, 10 FEB

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has promised certain concessions to the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) in return for ending its boycott of the India match at the ICC Men's T20 World Cup, though these will only be announced after the tournament concludes, sources said on Tuesday.

According to Telecom Asia Sport, the PCB had placed several demands before the ICC, including an increase in Pakistan's annual revenue share, revival of India-Pakistan bilateral cricket, and enforcement of handshake protocols during matches between the two sides. Cricbuzz further reported that both the PCB and Bangladesh Cricket Board (BCB) also sought a tri-series involving India, though the ICC is not in a position to guarantee any bilateral or tri-series involving India as such decisions fall under the BCCI and the Indian government.

Mohsin Naqvi, Jay Shah –*x*

A PCB source told PTI that any concessions granted by the ICC would be made public only after the T20 World Cup. The ICC has already confirmed that the BCB will face no sanctions and will be awarded an ICC event in the 2028-31 cycle, preferably the Under-19 Men's World Cup.

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif had announced a boycott of the February 15 group match against India in Colombo in solidarity with Bangladesh, who were replaced by Scotland after refusing to play matches in India citing security concerns. Following intense back-channel talks involving the ICC, Sri Lanka President Anura Kumara Dissanayake and the BCB, Pakistan withdrew the boycott on Monday night.

Sources said the Sri Lankan President's intervention and briefings from senior officials played a key role. The PCB has since received clearance to play India should the teams meet again later in the tournament.

While PCB chairman Mohsin Naqvi reportedly raised the issue of increased ICC revenues and the possibility of India-Pakistan matches at neutral venues in the World Test Championship, insiders noted that most WTC fixtures remain bilateral and outside ICC control. —*PTI*

BUTTLER BATS FOR WALKIE-TALKIE TO SEND SIGNALS

Senior England batter Jos Buttler said cricket lags behind other sports in real-time coach-to-player communication after head coach Brendon McCullum used a walkie-talkie to relay messages to captain Harry Brook during the T20 World Cup win over Nepal. Buttler praised McCullum's sharpness, defended Jofra Archer and Adil Rashid despite expensive spells, and said the tight contest underlined T20's fine margins. He also described the Wankhede pitch as slightly tacky.

Netherlands boost Super 8 hopes with win over Namibia

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

—NETHERLANDS CRICKET/X

The Netherlands strengthened their chances of reaching the Super 8 stage in the men's T20 World Cup with a confident seven-wicket victory over Namibia in New Delhi on Tuesday. Bas de Leede scored an assured 72, anchoring the chase after Namibia posted 156 for 8 in their innings. Namibia's first outing of the tournament showed signs of rust, with Jan Frynlinck (30) and Jan Nicol Loftie-Eaton (42) revitalising the innings with a steady 50-run stand, while JJ Smit (22) provided late fireworks. However, Namibia fell short on a lively pitch.

The Dutch, who had previously lost to Pakistan, displayed greater composure. After losing Max O'Dowd early, opener Mochale Levitt's quick innings set the tone before falling in the powerplay. Colin Ackermann (32) steadied the innings with a fluent partnership with de Leede, who scored off 48 balls, including nine boundaries and four sixes. Skipper Scott Edwards finished unbeaten on 18, guiding the Netherlands to 159 for three in 18 overs.

Earlier, the Dutch bowlers controlled the early stages. Logan van Beek (2/13) and Aryan Dutt (1/13) bowled tightly, with Dutt's breakthrough dismissing Nikolaas Davin Steenkamp. Namibia's skipper Gerhard Erasmus provided resistance, hitting 16 runs in one over, but the Dutch rotated bowlers well. JJ Smit's late sixes threatened a comeback, but de Leede's quick delivery ended Namibia's innings. The Netherlands now face the USA in Chennai on Friday, while Namibia meet India the following day. —*PTI*

Seifert, Allen shatter records as New Zealand crush UAE

CHENNAI, 10 FEB

Tim Seifert and Finn Allen produced a record-breaking opening stand to power New Zealand to a commanding 10-wicket win over the UAE in the ICC Men's T20 World Cup on Tuesday.

After the UAE posted 173 for six — their highest total in tournament history — on the back of unbeaten 66 from captain Muhammad Waseem and 55 from Alishan Sharafu, New Zealand made light work of the chase on a red-soil Chepauk pitch.

Seifert (89 not out off 42 balls) and Allen (84 not out off 50) unleashed a sustained assault on the UAE bowling, sharing an unbroken 175-run partnership off 92 balls — the highest stand for any wicket in T20 World Cup history. The target was overhauled in just 15.2 overs.

New Zealand's Tim Seifert, right, and Finn Allen interact during the ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 in Chennai, on Tuesday —*PTI*

Allen was particularly severe on the pacers, bringing up his 100th six in T20 Internationals, while Seifert impressed with inventive strokeplay, including reverse sweeps off left-arm spinner Haider Ali. Haider was the only UAE bowler to offer any resistance. Earlier, Waseem and Sharafu added briskly in the powerplay before Sharafu was dismissed in the 15th over by a sharp relay catch involving Mark Chapman and Daryl Mitchell. —*PTI*

Spin-led Australia hold edge over Ireland

COLOMBO, 10 FEB

Australia will play against Ireland on 11 February at 3pm in Colombo

Their recent form has been far from convincing and the loss of two lead pacers has only added to Australia's woes but the former champions will still start as overwhelming favourites in their T20 World Cup opener against Ireland here on Wednesday.

Pat Cummins, Mitchell Starc and Josh Hazlewood form one of most potent fast-bowling units of the modern game and Australia will miss their services in the showpiece event.

While Cummins and Hazlewood were ruled out due to injuries, left-arm pacer Starc has retired from the format internationally.

In their absence, Nathan Ellis is expected to lead the pace attack but even he has an injury cloud hovering over him and is yet to play a game since missing the Big Bash League final with a hamstring issue.

Seasoned leg-spinner Adam Zampa is entering the tournament after overcoming a groin issue, which made it possible for him to be available for the group stage.

Considering the conditions across the sub-continent, Zampa will be critical to Australia's hopes in the tournament, which they last won in 2022.

The team lost in the semi-finals of the last edition to India.

While leading the spin attack, the experienced Zampa will look forward to form a fruitful partnership with Cooper Connolly and Matt Kuhnemann.

Australia have batting firepower and several all-rounders. Ireland encountered a stiff task after losing to Sri Lanka. —*PTI*

F1's Kimi Antonelli escapes unharmed after car crash

BRACKLEY, 10 FEB

Formula 1 driver Kimi Antonelli has escaped unscathed from a road accident close to his home in San Marino. His Mercedes team said Tuesday that the Italian was unhurt with no other vehicles involved in the crash, which happened on Saturday. Sports daily La Gazzetta dello Sport said a Mercedes supercar crashed into a retaining wall along the San Marino Superstrada in Italy. It said a probe has been opened into the causes of the accident. Preseason testing continues Wednesday in Bahrain. —*PTI*

Asian Shooting: Aakriti bags Silver, Anjum Bronze

NEW DELHI, 10 FEB

India's Aakriti Dahiya and Anjum Moudgil won the silver and bronze medal respectively in the women's 50m rifle three positions event at the Asian Shooting Championship here on Tuesday.

Kazakhstan shooter Sofiya Shulzhenko set a new world record in the same event en route to winning gold at the Karni Singh Range.

Sofiya ended the 35-shot final with a score of 358.2, four points clear of Aakriti, while Anjum clinched bronze with 340.4.

Sofiya's score also earned world junior, along with Asian and Asian junior records. Later, in the junior women's final, Prachi Gaikwad won gold.

Tomiris Amanova claimed silver and Anushka Thokur secured bronze. Prachi, Anushka and Hazel took team gold.

In senior team competition, Kazakhstan edged India by four points. Arina Malinovskaya topped qualifications. Anjum was second, Ashi fourth and Aakriti sixth. Shulzhenko surged during prone and standing positions. Adarsh Singh led rapid-fire pistol precision round. Anish Bhanwala and Neeraj Kumar remained in contention.

India's medal tally stands at 39 gold, 15 silver and 12 bronze medals. —*PTI*

Aakriti Dahiya & Anjum Moudgil at the Asian Shooting Championships —*FB*

India seek strong start in FIH Pro League

ROURKELA, 10 FEB

The Indian men's hockey team will seek to establish early dominance in its quest to do way better than the eighth-place finish in the last edition when the side begins its FIH Pro League campaign against formidable Belgium and Argentina here from Wednesday.

India will open against Belgium on Wednesday, followed by Argentina on Thursday. The hosts will face Belgium again on Saturday before concluding the Rourkela leg against Argentina on Sunday.

The squad, a blend of experienced players and emerging talent, will hope to use familiar conditions at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium to its advantage.

Belgium and Argentina arrive in good form. Argentina are second in the standings with 11 points from four matches, while Belgium are third with 10 points. Belgium have dominated recent head-to-head encounters, winning 22 of 35 matches against India since 2013, while India hold the edge against Argentina with 10 wins from 19 meetings.

India captain Harmanpreet Singh praised youngsters Amandeep Lakra, Manmeet Singh and Rosan Kujur, saying they had "performed exceptionally well" and were ready to step up.

With strong home support expected, India will target early momentum. —*PTI*

Allegations complicate Cadillac's 2026 F1 marketing launch. –*x*

Cadillac F1 confident of resolving lawsuit with Michael Bay

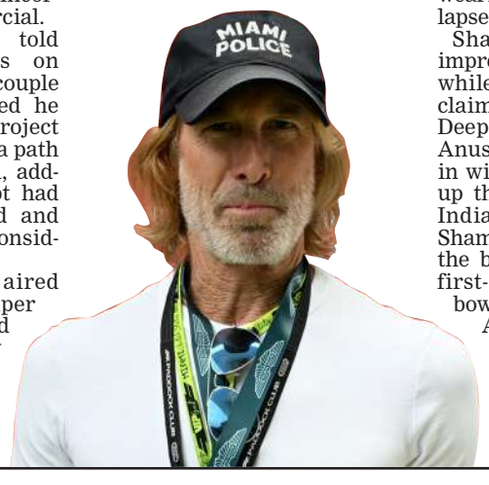
LOS ANGELES, 10 FEB

Cadillac's F1 team has said it is confident of resolving a legal dispute with filmmaker Michael Bay, who has sued the team for $1.5 million, alleging his ideas were used without permission in a Super Bowl commercial.

In a 19-page lawsuit filed on Friday in Los Angeles Superior Court, Bay accused Dan Towriss, CEO of the team, of using his creative concepts before "abruptly" abandoning plans to work with him. Bay claims his ideas, including the use of former US president John F Kennedy's "We Choose to Go the Moon" speech, were incorporated into the commercial.

Responding, Cadillac told The Associated Press on Monday it met Bay "a couple of times" but concluded he could not meet the project timeline. "There wasn't a path forward," the team said, adding the creative concept had already been developed and Bay was only being considered as a director.

The commercial aired during Sunday's Super Bowl and unveiled Cadillac's new car. Bay said Towriss reacted after viewing a Transformers 3 clip with JFK speech. —*PTI*



KUMAR GHARAMI SHINES BRIGHT

Bengal crush Andhra, enter Ranji semis

KALYANI, 10 FEB

Bengal stormed into the Ranji Trophy semifinals with a commanding innings and 90-run victory over Andhra on Tuesday, riding on Sudip Kumar Gharami's career-best 299 and a disciplined bowling effort on the final day.

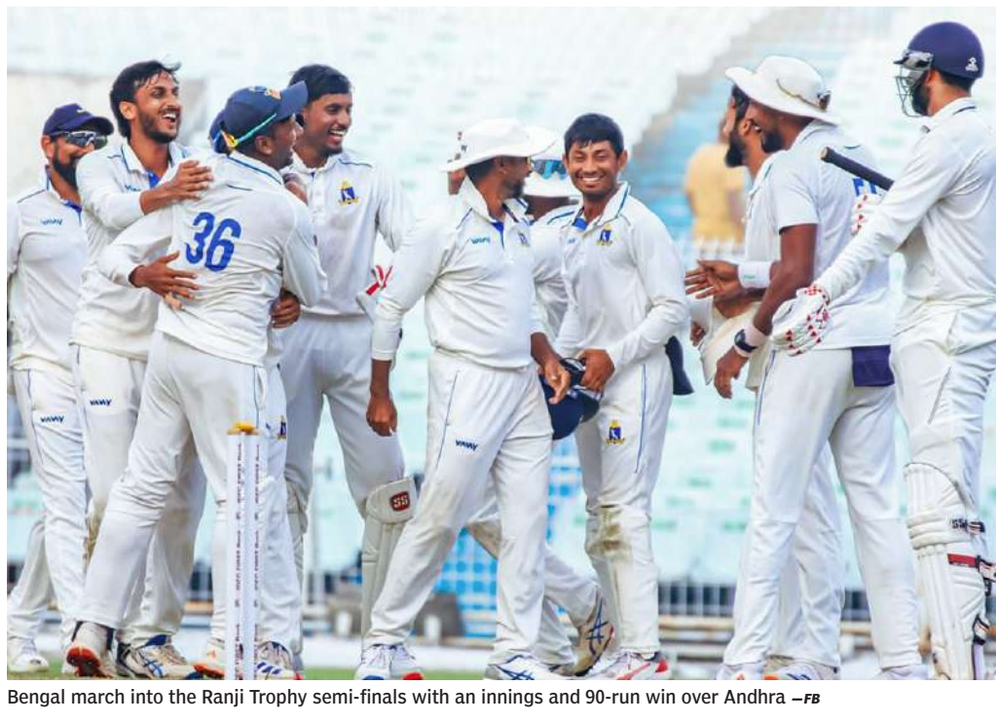
Andhra, resuming their second innings at 64 for three on Day 5, were always facing an uphill task after conceding a massive 334-run first-innings lead. Any slim hopes of avoiding an outright defeat were dashed as left-arm spinner Shahbaz Ahmed exploited the wearing pitch to trigger a collapse.

Shahbaz finished with impressive figures of 4 for 72, while Suraj Sindhu Jaiswal claimed two wickets. Akash Deep, Sumanta Gupta and Anustup Majumdar chipped in with a wicket each to wrap up the innings. Out-of-favour India seamer Mohammed Shami, who contributed with the bat in Bengal's imposing first-innings total of 629, bowled just three overs in Andhra's second innings.

India all-rounder Nitish Kumar Reddy provided the lone resistance for Andhra, scoring a fighting 90 off 144 balls with seven fours and two sixes. Chasing 270 runs to make Bengal bat again, Andhra needed a strong stand between Reddy and captain Ricky Bhui, but Bhui was dismissed by Shahbaz for 30. Shahbaz later removed Saurabh Kumar and then Reddy to seal the contest.

Tripurana Vijay, 46, and Kalidindi Raju, 25, delayed the end briefly before Gupta took the final wicket. Injured wicketkeeper KS Bharat did not bat.

Bengal will face Jammu and Kashmir in the semifinals from 15 v, while Karnataka meet Uttarakhand in the other last-four clash. —*PTI*



Bengal march into the Ranji Trophy semi-finals with an innings and 90-run win over Andhra —*FB*